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THE GOLDEN SHOE IS BACK! • DEPORTIVO • MARCO SIMONE • WORLD CUP 98

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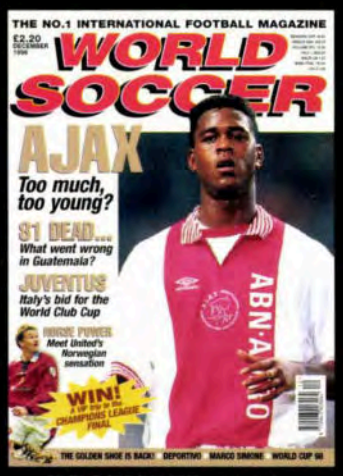

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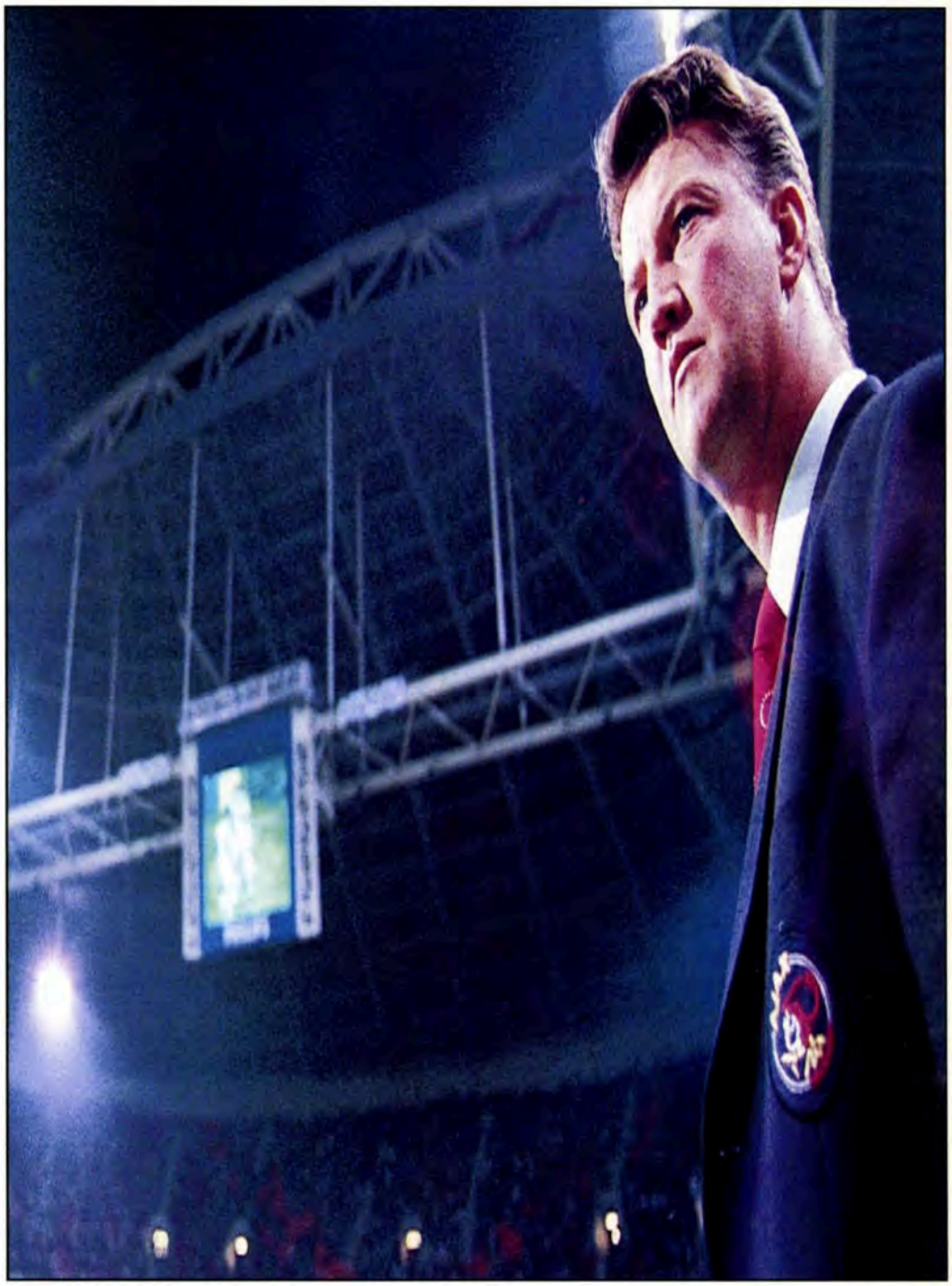

Cover story: Ajax 10

We report from Amsterdam on the problems facing the Dutch champions. In the culmination of what has so far been a troubled season – a result of mounting injuries, the Bosman ruling and the move to the new Arena – head coach Louis Van Gaal announced he will leave the club next summer. Have they done too much, too young?

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adidas GOLDEN SHOE ESM EXCLUSIVE

Return of the glittering prize

WORLD SOCCER and Adidas have revived the Golden Shoe. Keir Radnedge reports how a new formula points the way back for the continent's top award

THE Golden Shoe is back. The prize which rewards, annually, the top marksman in European league football is being revived by its original sponsors, Adidas, and – excusively in the United Kingdom – through the pages of *WORLD SOCCER*.

The original competition was launched in 1967 and brought to a standstill in 1991 after growing dissatisfaction over manipulation of the statistical system then in use. Now *WORLD SOCCER* – along with its partners in the European Sports Magazine group* – has developed a refined formula which will balance the comparative value of goals in the top national championships with those in the minnow nations (*see Rules and Regulations*).

Adidas always wanted to revive the award. The problem was finding a new publishing platform and a foolproof formula

The original Golden Shoe (or Golden Boot) was developed in the mid-1960s by Adidas and promoted through the columns of the Paris weekly, *France Football*. Simultaneously the partnership also organised a competition which awarded achievement points to clubs, based on their results both in domestic competition and in European tournaments. But it was the Golden Shoe – or Golden Boot – which captured the fans' imagination.

The great goalscorers have always gained the lion's share of admiration throughout the world, throughout football's century. Arthur Friedenreich, popularly hailed as the first man to score more than 1,000 goals, remains a legend in Brazil though he retired before the first World Cup in 1930. In Argentina, the exploits of the Paraguayan marksman, Arsenio Erico, are the stuff of history. Hungary's Ferenc Puskas, Brazil's Pele, West Germany's Gerd Muller and Portugal's Eusebio earned both admiration and affection for their achievements in the penalty area.

First winner of the Golden Shoe was Eusebio himself, who scored 42 Portuguese league goals for Benfica in that inaugural 1967-68 season.

The award concept was translated by Adidas into other events and competitions, starting with the World Cup. In several countries the company's national subsidiaries took over the idea to reward the top scorer in their domestic league – such as England.

At domestic level the award has proved easy to assign. But manipulation of the European competition led to its being wound up at the end of the 1990-91 season.

Discontent has begun to manifest itself as early as 1976 when the Cypriot, Sotiris Kaiafas, won the Golden Shoe by scoring 39 goals for Omonia Nicosia. With some justification, fans in the major European football nations demanded to know how a Cypriot – with all due respect – could claim precedence in the arts of goal-scoring beyond the likes of Muller, Hans Krankl and Co.

In an attempt to close that loophole, it was agreed that the minnow nations should be excluded from consideration. But then more a serious threat emerged from eastern Europe, where a handful of authoritarian officials saw the Golden Shoe as a vehicle for both sporting and political propaganda.

The most notorious case was that of Romania's Rodion Camataru, who won the 1986-87 award by scoring 44 goals for Dinamo Bucharest.

Camataru, who had joined Dinamo at the start of the season from Universitatea Craiova, had never previously figured among the Golden Boot contenders, although compatriot Dudu Georgescu had twice won the award in the 1970s. By the start of May 1987, with Dinamo having played 25 of their scheduled 34 League games, Camataru had claimed a modest 19 goals. As far as the Golden Boot was concerned, he was out of sight compared with top contenders Toni Polster (FK Austria), Clive Allen (Tottenham) and Brian McClair (Celtic).

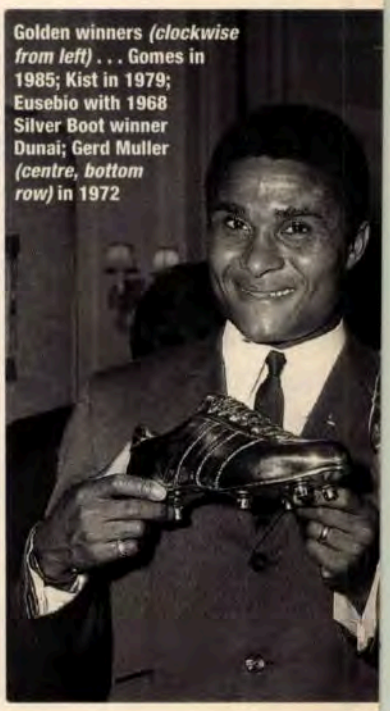
Then, on May 3, Camataru suddenly came alive – scoring four goals in the first hour in Dinamo's 4-4 draw with neightbours Victoria Bucharest. The next week he scored from a penalty in another draw, this time with Petrolul Ploesti. It was his seventh penalty of the season.

The decisive match occurred on May 13 when Dinamo were held 1-1 by Steaua in a top-of-the-table clash. Camataru failed to score. Steaua retained a nine-point lead which virtually ensured them of the championship. Dinamo, six points ahead of third-placed Victoria, were similarly virtually sure of European qualification in either the UEFA Cup or the Cup-winners Cup (since their opponents in the Cup Final would be . . . Steaua).

It was from this moment when, to all intents and purposes, Dinamo had little left to play for, that Camataru hit a streak of form unique to his entire career. In seven matches inside one month and one day, he scored no fewer than 21 goals.

Yet Dinamo, fantastically, won only two of those seven games.

Camataru, who had scored 23 goals in the first 27 games of term, had managed 21 in the last seven and was the clear winner of the Golden Boot with a grand



Golden winners *(clockwise from left)* . . . Gomes in 1985; Kist in 1979; Eusebio with 1968 Silver Boot winner Dunai; Gerd Muller *(centre, bottom row)* in 1972

Past masters *(clockwise from left)* . . . Rush, Sanchez, Van Basten, Pancev

PAST WINNERS

YEAR		SILVER	BRONZE
1968	EUSEBIO (Benfica) 43	DUNAI (Ujpest) 36	LENNOX (Celtic) 32
1969	JEKOV (Sofia) 36	SIDERIS (Olympiakos) 35	KOYELBERGER (Austria) 31
			DUNAI (Ujpest) 31
1970	G MULLER (Bayern) 38	DEVILLETT (Spora) 31	
		JEKOV (CSKA Sofia) 31	
1971	SKOBLAR (Marseille) 44	KEITA (St Etienne) 42	DEDES (Panionios) 28
1972	G. MULLER (Bayern) 40	ANTONIADIS (Panathinaikos) 39	HARPER (Aberdeen) 33
			SANTRAC (IFK Belgrade) 33
			LEE (Man City) 33
1973	EUSEBIO (Benfica) 40	G. MULLER (Bayern) 36	JEKOV (CSKA Sofia) 29
1974	YAZALDE (Sporting) 46	KRANKL (Rapid Vienna) 36	G. MULLER (Bayern) 30
			HEYNCKES (Borussia MG) 30
			BIANCHI (Reims) 30
1975	GEORGESCU (D. Bucharest) 33	YAZALDE (Sporting Lisbon) 30	RIEDL (Antwerp) 28
		GEELS (Ajax) 30	VAN DER KUYLEN (PSV) 28
		ONNIS (Monaco) 30	RIEDL (Antwerp) 28
			VAN DER KUYLEN (PSV) 28
1976	KAIAFAS (Omonia Nicosia) 39	BIANCHI (Reims) 34	RISI (Zurich) 33
1977	GEORGESCU (D. Bucarest) 47	VARADI (V. Budapest) 36	GEELS (Ajax) 34
			D. MULLER (Koln) 34
1978	KRANKL (Rapid Wien) 41	BIANCHI (Paris SG) 37	GEELS (Ajax) 32
1979	KIST (AZ 67) 34	MAVROS (AFK) 31	
		FEKETE (Ujpest) 31	
1980	VANDENBERGH (Lierse) 39	FAZEKAS (Ujpest) 36	SCHACHNER (Austria) 34
1981	SLAVKOV (Trakia) 31	NYILASI (Ferencvaros) 30	RUMMENIGGE (Bayern) 29
1982	KIEFT (Ajax) 32	KIST (AZ '67) 29	
		ONNIS (Tours) 29	
1983	GOMES (Porto) 36	HOUTMANN (Feyenoord) 30	ANASTOPOULOS (Olympiakos) 29
			NICHOLAS (Celtic) 29
1984	RUSH (Liverpool) 32	VAN BASTEN (Ajax) 28	CLAESEN (Seraing) 27
1985	GOMES (Porto) 39	McGAUCHEY (Linfield) 34	HALILHODZIC (Nantes) 28
1986	VAN BASTEN (Ajax) 37	PROTASOV (Dnjepr) 35	POLSTER (Austria) 33
			TANJU (Samsunsport) 33
1987	CAMATARU (D. Bucarest) 44	POLSTER (Austria) 39	SIRAKOV (Vitosha) 36
1988	TANJU (Galatasaray) 39	ERIKSEN (Servette) 36	PITURCA (Steaua Bucharest) 34
1989	MATEUT (D. Bucharest) 43	CORAS (V. Bucharest) 36	BALTAZAR (Atletico) 35
1990	SANCHEZ (Real Madrid) 38	STOICHKOV (CSKA Sofia) 38	RODAX (Admira Wacker) 35
1991	PANCEV (Red Star) 34	COLAK (Galatasaray) 31	DANEK (Tyrol) 29

total of 44 to leave a furious Polster five goals adrift.

Polster's reaction spoke volumes. "Do not expect me to attend the awards ceremony," he said. "I do not believe I can honestly shake his hand as a sportsman."

To be fair to Camataru, he was only a pawn in a Romanian game whose depth of corruption was to be revealed only after the collapse of the Ceausescu regime. But the manner of his success tarnished the subsequent successes of other Communist European winners such as Dorin Mateut (also Dinamo Bucharest, 1989) and Hristo Stoichkov (joint winner with Hugo Sanchez in 1990).

It was hardly surprising when *France Football* withdrew its support at the end of the 1990-91 season. Adidas, lacking a promotional partner, scaled down the operation. The annual spectacular presentation nights were cancelled. Darko Pancev, the last formal winner in 1991, was never honoured with the trappings of his success. When the 1996-97 winner receives his revived honour, Pancev may well also get his just deserts.

In the interim Adidas has made several ad hoc awards to unofficial winners but only to maintain the company's rights over the competition.

Adidas always wanted to revive it. The problem was finding a new publishing platform and foolproof formula.

Adidas opened discussions with various magazines early last year. Properly, *France Football* was offered first option but declined. Adidas thus developed discussions with the ESM magazines group which includes *WORLD SOCCER*. The challenge was finding a scoring system which could reflect the differing standards among Europe's footballing nations.

Eventually, after various computations based on previous seasons, a formula was agreed. It is not necessarily perfect. It may throw up anomalies. At the end of the season the system will be studied and further refined.

WORLD SOCCER is proud to be the exclusive UK partner for the venture. Each month *WORLD SOCCER* will publish the updated statistics, which are being compiled by the Reuters agency.

The Golden Shoe is back!

RULES AND REGULATIONS

1 The competition is open to all players in the top division of the national championship in the country in which they play their club football.
2 The only goals which count are those scored in league matches.
3 Each goal scored earns the scorer one point.
4 This point is then multiplied by the factor allocated to the country in which the scorer plays his club football.
5 This multiplier is based on the assessment applied by UEFA to measure countries' representation in the UEFA Cup, thus:

- Goals scored in countries with three or four teams in the UEFA Cup (position one to eight on the UEFA coefficient list) will be multiplied by a factor of two;
- Goals scored in countries with two teams in the UEFA Cup (positions nine to 21 on the UEFA coefficient list) will be multiplied by a factor of 1.5;
- Goals scored in all other countries will be multiplied by a factor of one (positions 22 on down).

6 The player who, at the end of the mainstream European league season in June, has the highest points total will be designated winner of the Adidas Golden Shoe.
7 Official rankings will be published monthly by *WORLD SOCCER*.

** ESM comprises WORLD SOCCER (UK), A Bola (Portugal), Don Balon (Spain), Gazzetta dello Sport (Italy), Foot (Belgium), Kicker (Germany), Onze-Mondial (France), Sport (Switzerland) and Voetbal International (Holland).*

Keir Radnedge
COMMENTARY

Learning the Tallinn lesson

NO MORE farces such as the recent Estonia v Scotland game will be allowed in the World Cup.

FIFA's security revisions, drawn up hastily in the wake of the disaster at the Mateo Flores stadium in Guatemala City (see pages 12-13), include a paragraph especially designed to deal with the problems which arose in Tallinn.

You may recall that Estonia v Scotland was originally set for the afternoon until BBC Scotland realised it could not broadcast simultaneously with the memorial service for the children and their teacher tragically murdered in Dunblane.

Accordingly the Estonia match was switched to the evening. This meant the Estonians had to import temporary floodlights from Finland – and the Scots objected that they were not up to standard, that the glare and shadows would have incapacitated goalkeepers at corners.

FIFA's representative, Mr Gantenbein from Luxembourg, decided on the morning of the match that it should be brought forward to a lunchtime kick-off. That upset Estonia's Icelandic coach, Teitur Thordarsson, as well as the thousands of fans who had bought tickets and did not know – until too late – that the kick-off had been switched.

The Estonian team, of course, did not turn up, weakly blaming a shortage of available buses to bring them in from their training camp for the earlier kick-off.

Now, were Scotland being bloody-minded in objecting to floodlights under which both Italy and Turkey had previously played? No – but it shows how concerned they were about the Estonians' talent for causing an upset.

Were the Estonians at fault for not turning up? Certainly. The rule within international football is that you play when you are told – then you fight your corner.

One-sided affair . . . the Scots go for an early bath

It shows how concerned Scotland were about the Estonians' talent for causing an upset

Was FIFA at fault for bringing the kick-off forward? Absolutely. Gantenbein told Zurich that there was no security or logistical problem in doing that. But it was manifestly unfair on the Estonian fans. Push the game back until the following afternoon – yes. But pulling the game forward? Can you imagine how England or Germany or France or Spain would react to such an order?

Now comes the clarification. FIFA's new stadium security guidelines insist that all World Cup ties must be played, if at night, under "permanently fixed" floodlights. If that is impossible, the match must be set for full daylight hours.

What happened in Estonia should not happen again. But then, it should not have happened.

As daft as ever

IT WAS former England manager Bobby Robson who, most famously, once described Paul Gascoigne as "daft as a brush".

Such a comment, viewed with the blessing of hindsight, might now be considered an insult to brushes.

Many of Gazza's exploits, on and off the pitch, display a sinister edge – a lack of control which reflects appallingly not only on the player but on his entourage of agents, accountants, lawyers and drinking partners.

He has never quite grown out of the juvenile idiocy which earned both the frustration and fury of Jack Charlton, the manager who originally signed him at 17 for Newcastle United. While launching his latest book, Charlton recalled how one of Gascoigne's favourite tricks had been tying the other players' shoe laces together.

Glenn Roeder, then club captain and later Gazza's closest football friend, threatened to "chin him". Charlton says: "I told Paul that if he didn't treat the senior pros with a little respect, he would be out and I would see he never got another club . . . I don't think it changed him one iota."

That has been Gascoigne's downfall. For all his wonderful talent, all the adulation, all the money, he has not changed. Each succeeding blunder is followed with tearful protestations that he will change his ways. He never does. The circle of misbehaviour, apology, further misbehaviour and further apology just carries on rolling along.

For example . . . a year ago Gascoigne was sent off playing for Rangers in the UEFA Champions League. He said later: "I'm really sorry. I know I let everyone down. I've learned my lesson. It won't happen again." Yet, exactly a year later and playing against Ajax back on the same Champions League stage, Gascoigne was sent off for taking a petulant kick at Dutch defender Winston Bogarde *(right)*. It emerged, virtually simultaneously, that the Gascoigne who could not hold his temper in public could not hold it in private, either.

He had gone out against Ajax, it emerged, only two days after a violent bust-up – and not the first – with wife Sheryl.

So what happens to Gascoigne now? Will Rangers want to keep him once they have achieved their goal, next May, of landing a ninth successive championship? Will Glenn Hoddle, England's born-again Christian of a new manager, want to persevere in the long term with him?

While Rangers manager Walter Smith says: "Understanding can only go so far. There's a limit to anyone's patience." However, Charlton insists that "as a manager, you don't cut off your nose to spite your face".

Gascoigne – to be fair – did not avoid the media after the Ajax anguish. He said: "I deeply regret what happened in Amsterdam. I think I took the domestic problems into the match with me, which I shouldn't have. It showed in what happened. Now I have to face what's happened and come back stronger – trying to play to the best of my abilities for Rangers and for England."

Same old Gazza, same old story.

There's only one Jorge Campos

FIFA has put its considerable foot down on colourful Jorge Campos *(left)*. The goalkeeper whose kit puts even David Seaman in the Day-Glo shade has been told he cannot ply his trade simultaneously in both Mexican championship and Major League Soccer in the United States.

That's not what Campos believed when he signed up in June last year and was widely reported as saying: "Where else in the world can you play simultaneously in two countries' championships?"

Even the Americans appeared to believe that, while Campos would give his best for Los Angeles Galaxy during MLS, he would flit back down over the border whenever possible. As *Soccer America* colleague Ridge Mahoney reported at the time: "According to MLS executive Sunil Galati, MLS bought his rights and will have first call on his services although he will continue to play in the Mexican league."

MLS had happily agreed, as I reported in this column earlier this year, that Campos would play for his Atlante club in their opening match of the current Mexican championship in return for Atlante generously allowing Campos to play in Galaxy's first match of the 1997 US season – when, presumably, Atlante believe they have first call on the player.

In fact, although Campos flew back to Mexico expecting to line up against Veracruz he was 'pulled' at the last minute. Not because anyone in the US federation or MLS objected – they had, after all, negotiated the deal in the first place. Instead it was the Mexicans who decided to play safe and rang FIFA in Zurich to check if they could play Campos.

Atlante believed they had the right because, despite his contract with Galaxy via MLS, his player registration has always remained in Mexico. He has been 'merely' on loan to MLS.

FIFA told Atlante in no uncertain terms that the concept of a 'shared' player does not exist. Atlante had agreed to Campos playing in MLS and, unless the requisite international transfer certificates were forthcoming, he could not play in domestic competition in Mexico.

Atlante, having hyped their match on the back of the prospect of Campos's presence, were not best pleased but, being owned by a scion of the family of FIFA's senior vice-president Guillermo Canedo, had no option but to do as they were told.

Paying for the privilege

STRAW in the wind? Germany's *Premiere* pay-television channel has banned pubs and bars from showing its live broadcasts of Bundesliga matches. The demand is based upon the 'general conditions of business' whereby a *Premiere* decoder may be used only for private purposes.

The network, which charges subscribers a monthly fee of around £20, estimates losses resulting from pub presentations at £2.5m a year.

Small beer? Not if Sky decides to follow that example in England.

Boots and all

IF THE shoe fits . . . Adidas has become a formal sponsor of the 1998 World Cup, which includes merchandising rights. The price has been estimated at around £25million – a far cry from the days when Adidas got there on the cheap.

For many years Adidas were unofficial sponsors. The German sportswear company supplied all the official footballs and a majority of the participating countries with their kit. The three-stripe motif was more in evidence than the advert boards of the multi-national corporations which had paid to be recognised as official sponsors.

This was how the late Horst Dassler, son of company founder Adolf Dassler (hence the name, Adi Das), promoted the family business. Using kit contracts provided him entry to federations and confederations all around the world and he was the power behind the throne when Joao Havelange acceded to the FIFA presidency and then led the way, with the World Cup, in event sponsorship.

Dassler's death, in the late 1980s, threw his grand plan into confusion. The rest of the family did not share his interest in the politics of international sport and the company itself had appeared to be in commercial free-fall at the time it was rescued from the wrecking clutches of Bernard Tapie.

In the meantime, the relationship between sportswear companies and sports organisations had changed radically. Umbro, Reebok and Nike had discovered the lucrative market of replica strips. Now it's not enough for a sportswear company to merely give kit to clubs and national associations – they have to compete for the contract to do so.

As at club level, so at World Cup level. Thus Adidas has had to buy the key to what might once have been considered its own front door.

Zurich 1 Paris 0

WHISPERS that FIFA might quit Zurich and return to its original home in Paris can be discounted. Speculation had arisen during negotiations about the world governing body's interest in the premises of the Hotel Sonneberg next door. Ultimately the matter went to a local referendum which endorsed the issue of a 60-year lease.

FIFA general-secretary Sepp Blatter had something to put the smile back on his face after a trying time in separate(!) meetings with World Cup organising delegations from Japan and South Korea. Blatter says: "Now we have room to expand a little. FIFA is apparently very popular in the city – the people here want us to stay."

Of Mark and Matthew

MARK BOSNICH and the late Matthew Harding had in common their active devotion to the game of football. Beyond that, it would appear, little more. Bosnich is Aston Villa's Australian goalkeeper who enraged White Hart Lane by mimicking a Nazi salute in response to barracking from Tottenham fans who remember Bosnich's controversial clash with German striker Jurgen Klinsmann two seasons ago.

Harding was the Chelsea vice-chairman, among the 100 richest men in Britain, who was killed in a helicopter crash in Cheshire while flying home from his club's League Cup defeat away to Bolton Wanderers.

Bosnich pleaded ignorance of Tottenham's Jewish connections in his defence. He owned up to an honest mistake and apologised profusely for any offence he might have caused with his gesturing.

As for Harding, his death was mourned by Chelsea fans with a rare display of emotion at a memento-strewn memorial wall at Stamford Bridge *(pictured above)*.

Up until 10 years ago, few fans could have named any of the directors of their club. Up until 10 years ago, most directors would have been considered on a social ego trip.

But Harding followed football and Chelsea as one of the lads. The fans appreciated it and loved the man for it.

How football has changed when directors have more understanding and empathy with the roots of the game than the players!

Nightmare 2002, continued

OUR interview last month with Sepp Blatter put the cat among the pigeons in Japan and South Korea. Blatter, you may recall, was disturbed that, in the four months since the 2002 World Cup had been assigned, the two nations had yet to sit down for formal discussions.

Our interview provoked a flurry of press releases and statements from both Tokyo and Seoul about how both nations are looking forward to the 2002 finals and how wonderful they will be.

First, of course, the organisers from both countries must sit down together and examine all the problems ahead.

One of the most thorny is this: which country will host the final? Will it go to the Olympic stadium in Seoul or the new major Japanese stadium in Yokohama (given that the National Stadium in Tokyo may not be up to scratch)? One suggestion envisaged a two-leg final, with one match in each country.

Chung Mong-joon, president of the South Korean federation, has a novel idea: the national teams of the two countries should play off for the right to host the final.

But will they be able to agree on a neutral venue?

Chung, of course, is also on FIFA's executive having won the faith of the Asian confederation two years ago when he inflicted a heavy defeat on Japanese candidate Tadao Murata.

The balance may shortly be restored. FIFA's expansion of the executive committee has offered an extra place to Asia. Saburo Kawabuchi, who directed – brilliantly – the launch of the J.League, has already put his name forward, and it will take a brave man to run against him.

Come to think about it, if the Japanese World Cup bidding committee had been able to bring Kawabuchi on board, they might never have been outflanked by Korea in the first place.

Nightmare 2002

Sepp Blatter, FIFA's general secretary, is a man with a lot on his mind. He talks exclusively to Keir Radnedge

COMPILED BY GAVIN HAMILTON AND JIM FOULERTON

Libero

What a cop-out

VIETNAM's Cup Final was a chaotic sort of affair. Dong Thap won 3-1, but members of the the losing team attacked the referee at the end, after five injured players had been carried off and nine yellow and red cards had been shown.

An inquiry is to be held, not surprisingly. After all, the short-tempered losers should have known better . . . they were Ho Chi Min City Police.

In trouble . . . Saeed al-Owairan

Desert Pele's own-goal

THREE TOP SAUDI players have been suspended by their clubs for a year following their conviction by an Islamic court for being involved in 'immoral acts'. In Saudi that normally means drinking or illicit affairs with women.

Saleh al-Dawoud, Fahd al-Ghashian and Saeed al-Owairan are the guilty three. Remember the latter, otherwise known as the Desert Pele? Cast your minds back to Saudi's 1-0 win against Belgium in USA 94, courtesy of 'one of the finest individual goals seen in the finals', *WORLD SOCCER* reported. 'Beating four players on a mazy run from inside his own half, Owairan carved open the Belgian rearguard to finish emphatically.'

Gazza had better stick with Rangers.

Not worthy . . . 'Ten Bellies' pays his respects to the Newcastle bench

Belly laughs

NEWCASTLE'S 5-0 ROUT of arch-rivals Manchester United caused ripples of laughter around much of the country, particularly when a portly invader resembling one of Gazza's mates walked up to the Newcastle dug-out and gave the 'we're not worthy' routine, bowing down to manager Kevin Keegan.

But a sense of humour evidently doesn't extend to the boardroom at St James' Park. Twenty-stone George 'Ten Bellies' Wright paid the penalty for his party piece, having his season ticket revoked and being banned from the ground.

Chinese checkers

SOCCER bosses in China have taken an unusual step in the campaign against the corruption of referees.

The Chinese FA, worried by continuing stories of officials being bribed, has now offered an inducement of its own.

If a referee can prove that he was offered a bribe and rejected it, then the CFA will pay him 100,000 yuan (about £10,000).

Cynics claim that this is merely forcing up the going rate for a 'fix' - and we await the outcome with interest.

A threat to the Ville

CLIFTONVILLE, the oldest club in Ireland – founded in 1879 – are in serious trouble after further outbreaks of violence.

Buses carrying fans, mainly Catholic, were stoned at Portadown before the recent League game between the two clubs, who have a tradition of rivalry.

Cliftonville led 1-0 at the interval, but their players refused to appear for the second half after they had been told by police that the damage to the buses was severe, and that there had been several injuries to travelling supporters.

Referee David Malcolm had no alternative but to abandon the game, and the inevitable inquiry could have serious consequences.

Brazil nut

BEWARE TAKING THE RISE out of Flamengo. The Rio de Janeiro club have become the butt of many a joke in Brazil since losing four games on the spin in the national championship, including a 4-1 defeat to local rivals Vasco da Gama. For one Rio apartment block porter this was all too much. When a Vasco-supporting colleague from a nearby building kept bragging about the result the Flamengo fan saw red and shot dead his tormentor.

Do tread carefully with Manchester United fans.

Piola's punch

THE DEATH OF ITALIAN hero Silvio Piola *(see page 47)* recalls the story of his infamous goal against England in 1939.

Piola beat Diego Maradona to a 'Hand of God' controversy by almost half a century when he punched a cross into the England net for Italy's second goal in a 2-2 draw at San Siro, Milan.

Not only that, he caught Arsenal's George Male in the face as he followed through, leaving him with a lovely black eye. There was quite a storm, by the standards of the day!

Curiously, Piola's 34th and last game for his country was against England, a 1-1 draw in Florence in 1952

Piola played for Pro Vercelli, Lazio and Juventus, scoring 395 goals in various competitions, plus 30 for Italy.

'U' couldn't make it up

AND WE THOUGHT the Premiership produced a nail-biting climax to last season. Well, in Peru a 'battle for the title' is just that. Sporting Cristal needed a point from their game against local rivals Universitario to claim a unique third championship in Lima's National Stadium. Cristal went a goal behind in the 66th minute, the 'U' goalscorer was later dismissed for a violent tackle, his manager dragged kicking and screaming down the same tunnel for his over-reaction to the sending off.

Cristal's Solano was next to go and just when 'U' thought things couldn't get any worse, their defender Carrranza was sent off. Two late penalties awarded to Cristal proved too much for 'U', whose substitutes ran on to the pitch and assaulted the referee, prompting a full-scale riot and inevitable abandonment of the game. Oh yes, and Cristal were awarded the title.

All quite run-of-the-mill stuff, until you remember that the same stadium was the venue for football's worst-ever disaster in May 1964, when 318 fans were crushed to death during an Olympic qualifier between Peru and Argentina.

Zheng's big break

ALL THE *WORLD SOCCER* staff and correspondents pride themselves on their soccer knowledge, but few of us reach the standard set by Zheng Ming, our man in China.

He has been invited to attend the annual spring training session run by the Chinese FA, at which all players from First and Second Division clubs get together for fitness tests and coaching sessions.

Zheng will be in charge of coaching a First Division club – as yet unknown – and says: "This is a great chance for me to make more contacts within the game, and to increase my knowledge."

UEFA CUP THIRD ROUND DRAW

Monaco (Fra) v Hamburg (Ger)
Brondby (Den) v Karlsruhe (Ger)
Tenerife (Spa) v Feyenoord (Hol)
Anderlecht (Bel) v Helsingborgs (Swe)
Metz (Fra) v Newcastle (Eng)
Club Brugge (Bel) v Schalke (Ger)
Internazionale (Ita) v Boavista (Por)
Valencia (Spa) v Besiktas (Tur)
Ties to be played on Nov 19 and Dec 3

Drinkmanship

RUSSIAN TITLE CONTENDERS Rotor Volgograd insist they were robbed of a crucial victory by a drunk linesman who ruled out a perfectly good 'goal' against Chernomorets Novorossiisk. Rotor thought they had scored when Gennady Yesipov headed home from close range in the 19th minute, but it was ruled out by officials.

"The team thinks the linesman was not in a sober state during the match. The goal was disallowed after the match," it was reported. Rotor president Vladimir Goryunov tried to investigate after the game but was told by the match inspector nothing was amiss. Goryunov persevered, prompting a Chernomorets official to suggest it was the Rotor president who was drunk. Goryunov denied the charges and has threatened to sue.

A spokesman at the organisation of Russian referees strongly denied Rotor's allegations.

Nations Cup dash . . . Liberia's George Weah

Liberia leave it late

IT WAS TOUCH AND GO for George Weah and his Liberian team-mates but they eventually made it to Zaire for the start of the qualifiers for the 1998 African Nations Cup finals.

A goalless draw marked a turning point for the war-ravaged country. Weah and his European-based team-mates sat in Abidjan in the Ivory Coast for three days before the match at the new Kamonyola stadium in Kinshasa, waiting for the rest of the squad to join them.

The home-based players were due to make the trip overland because an outbreak of fighting in Liberia's intermittent civil war had put Monrovia airport out of action. They eventually crossed the border on the eve of the match, leaving officials to scurry around finding some £30,000 to charter a plane to fly them south for six hours to get to the match

Weah, the reigning FIFA, African and European Footballer of the Year, usually dips into his own pocket to fund these excursions because the country's football association is bankrupt, but this time refused to put up the money for the flight, saying he had paid out enough already and would rather save his contribution for Liberia's World Cup campaign.

Eventually the money was found and the Liberians flew from the Ivory Coast to Zaire and went straight to the packed 75,000-capacity stadium to play out a goalless draw.

The result, given the extraordinary circumstances, was a major fillip for the disjointed Liberians, who keep up their national team commitments in a vain battle to unite their battered nation.

BADGE BUSINESS: EVERTON

***Nil satis nisioptimum*, nothing but the best is good enough, seems a standard enough club motto, a rally cry to the troops. Curious then that the main feature of Everton's badge is an old lock-up which was used to house troublesome Everton residents. People refer to it variously as Rupert's Tower or Rupert's Castle, after Prince Rupert, a Royalist supporter whose army set up camp on Everton Heights during an ill-fated siege of the city in the middle of the 17th century. Others know it as the Stone Jug or Roundhouse. It was actually built in 1787, long after Rupert was sent packing.**

Christm
won't come

Gavin Hamilton reports from Amsterdam on the problems facing Dutch champions Ajax

AMSTERDAM is a city full of contradictions. A city steeped in history and culture but host to Europe's most notorious red light district. A city so different from the rest of Holland that it hardly merits the label Dutch. And the home to a football club which, despite its modest means, has scaled the heights of European and world club football.

This time last year Ajax, as European champions, were preparing to travel to Tokyo to play Gremio of Brazil in the World Club Cup. A few days earlier they had entered the Estadio Bernabeu in Madrid and outplayed and outclassed Real, winning 2-0, although it could have been five or six. They returned victorious from Japan after beating the Brazilians in a penalty shoot-out. Ajax, Europe's friendliest footballing giant, were on top of the world.

Crucial to Ajax's success, as we all know, has been their ability to blood youngsters with little experience, but steeped in the club's values, reflected in the training acronym TIPS: technique, intelligence, personality and speed.

Ajax's heady mix of youth with intelligent, skilful football proved intoxicating and had commentators everywhere reaching for the superlatives. In a game where commercial interests were coming to dominate, Ajax were not so much a breath of fresh air as a force 10 gale.

Yet 12 months on, Ajax are struggling. The swagger with which they strutted around Europe's finest stadiums has at times become a stagger this season. The arrogance (Chief prop. L. Van Gaal) with which many teams were swept aside has been replaced by a stuttering lack of self-belief.

A string of mediocre peformances, characterised by a lack of goals, has left the champions playing catch-up in the domestic title race – at one point they were in ninth place. Meanwhile, only wins against Rangers, those spectacular continental underachievers, have put Ajax back on course for a quarter-final place in the UEFA Champions League.

On top of the bad results came the announcement that head coach Louis Van Gaal will leave the club next summer when his contract runs out.

It would be wrong to suggest that Ajax are a club in crisis, but the story of their season so far does offer a cautionary tale about the changing nature of European football in the 1990s.

Two things happened last summer which have altered the character of Ajax for good.

The first was the move to the new Arena. The second was the departures to Italy on free transfers, a result of the Bosman ruling, of three of the club's brightest young talents. Edgar Davids and Michael Reiziger joined Milan. Nwankwo Kanu moved to Inter, though, sadly, he has since been found to have a heart complaint and is unlikely to play again. Nigerian winger Finidi George also left, sold to Spain's Betis for £4.8million.

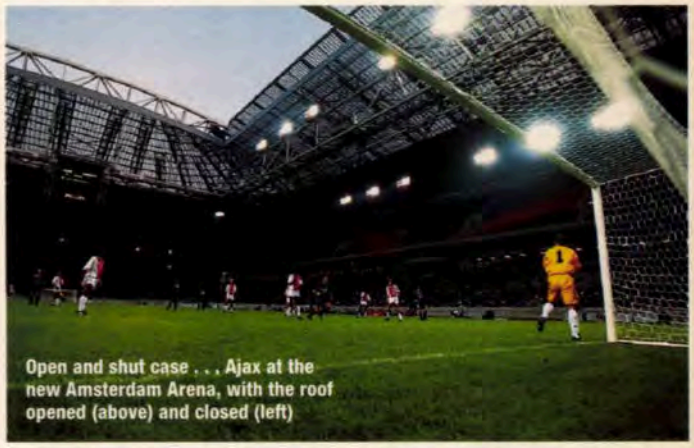
Van Gaal does not single out any one reason for the problems. "The difficulties are down to a combination of factors," he says. "When you see so many players leave the club and when six from last season's line-up are injured, you have to build a whole new team.

"That's a problem because that takes time, and we have no time."

Injuries have denied Ajax some of their best players. Captain Danny Blind, the Finn Jari Litmanen and teenage striker Patrick Kluivert have struggled all season. Winger Marc Overmars has overcome serious knee problems but is clearly not returned to full fitness, while many of the players brought in as replacements – Tijani Babangida, Peter Hoekstra, Mariano Juan, Ivan Gabrich, Richard Witschge – also have struggled with injuries.

However, for all the talk of the casualties (and there's no doubt Ajax have missed Kluivert, Litmanen and Blind), it is the players now in Italy and Spain who have been missed the most. The club could do nothing about the departures of Davids, Reiziger and Kanu – they were simply offered money which Ajax could not or were not prepared to match.

A club official once joked to me that when they wanted another young player for the first team, "we just go along to the pond and hook another one out." Yet when faced with this summer's departures the club turned to the transfer market, not the youth team, to plug the gaps.



Open and shut case . . . Ajax at the new Amsterdam Arena, with the roof opened (above) and closed (left)

'When so many players leave the club, you have to build a whole new team. That takes time and we have no time' – Louis Van Gaal

The summer move to the Amsterdam Arena, the new 52,000 futuristic superstadium, was supposed to herald a new era for Ajax as the club joined the ranks of European superpowers.

Yet the new stadium is universally unpopular. Supporters travelling away to see their team play Vitesse Arnhem were unanimous in their dislike of the Arena. It lacks atmosphere and the air of invincibility of the old De Meer Stadion, they said.

Many teams arrived at De Meer, but few conquered.

as early

At the Arena, it has been hard to establish a presence when the club share the venue with visiting rock stars such as Tina Turner. The use of the stadium for other events has damaged the pitch, and that has hindered the team's performances.

Early Ajax displays were so badly received that the Arena quickly earned the nickname The Birdcage because of the way fans' whistles reverberated around the stadium's much-heralded retractable roof.

Van Gaal has been chief among the critics. "In the old place you could smell the football," he says. "In the new stadium the pitch is very difficult to play on, especially for an attacking team like Ajax. But it's a fact of life and we have to deal with it."

Ajax have soldiered on as best they can. Recent results in the League, notably the victory at Arnhem, when they recovered from a sluggish start to win 4-1, suggest all is far from lost.

Kluivert returned to action in that game, after struggling with a knee problem since the spring, and scored Ajax's opening goal. "I wanted to play at Euro 96 and help my country," he says. "Looking back, I should not have done so. It meant I was not ready to play for Ajax at the start of the season and with a lot of others injured, we struggled."

"I am satisfied with our progress in the League and Champions League," Van Gaal said after the Vitesse game. "It's important we keep everything in our own hands until the winter break. It's important we play like we did today and keep up with our competitors. I am still hopeful.

"Today was a big match for Ajax and it will give me and the players a lot of confidence. Injuries forced us to play without seven players. Of these seven, six are automatic first-team choices."

Van Gaal insists that his side should be judged after the winter break, when the wounded will be walking again. "It will be difficult until the winter break, but then we can have a rest for six weeks. Then I believe the injured players will be back."

Unfortunately for Van Gaal, Christmas won't come early. His team face two crucial tests in the Champions League, against Auxerre at the Arena (Nov 20) and against Grasshopper in Zurich (Dec 4). Victory over the French champions would secure a place in the quarter-finals.

Four days after the Auxerre tie, they travel to Rotterdam to face Feyenoord, early pace-setters in the League, and on December 22 comes perhaps the biggest test, at home to current leaders PSV, who won 8-0 on the weekend Ajax beat Vitesse and already have beaten Feyenoord 7-2.

Van Gaal will be on the bench for these vital games, but insists he will leave the club next summer. He refuses to comment on speculation that he is bound for Barcelona, possibly with Ronald Koeman as his assistant, to replace Bobby Robson "It doesn't matter," he says. "What matters is the present. I hope to manage a big club, but I don't know if there are many clubs as big as Ajax."

Van Gaal's comments about Ajax's place in the scheme of things, however misplaced, raise important questions about the Bosman ruling and the way in which clubs like Ajax should respond to it.

Ajax are not Barcelona, or Milan, or even Manchester United. Holland is a small country and will not see the sort of crazy money that is likely to be generated by pay-per-view TV in Italy, Spain, Germany and England. The new stadium will provide Ajax with more income than in the past, but they will still have to rely on producing their own talent to compete at the very top.

The biggest litmus test of Ajax's ability to hang in with the big boys will be Kluivert, whose contract expires next summer. The teenager has yet to put pen to paper on a new deal and the danger is that Ajax could lose him on a free transfer to Milan. Even if he is persuaded to stay in Amsterdam there will still be the temptation to cash him in on the transfer market.

Either way, Ajax could lose their biggest talent of recent seasons. But then they are used to doing things differently in Amsterdam.

Future on the line . . . Coach Van Gaal ponders his next move

AJAX'S SEASON SO FAR

Aug 14	Friendly	Ajax 0 Milan 3
Aug 18	Dutch Supercup	Ajax 0 PSV Eindhoven 3
Aug 21	League	Ajax 1 NAC 0
Aug 24	League	Heerenveen 2 Ajax 0
Aug 28	League	Ajax 1 AZ 0
Sep 4	League	Roda JC 0 Ajax 0
Sep 8	League	NEC 2 Ajax 0
Sep 11	Champions Lge	Auxerre 0 Ajax 1
Sep 15	League	Ajax 2 Sparta 0
Sep 22	League	Ajax 1 De Graafschap 1
Sep 25	Champions Lge	Ajax 0 Grasshopper 1
Sep 29	League	Twente 1 Ajax 1
Oct 9	League	Ajax 3 Willem II 0
Oct 13	League	Utrecht 1 Ajax 1
Oct 16	Champions Lge	Ajax 4 Rangers 0
Oct 20	League	Ajax 1 Volendam 1
Oct 24	League	Ajax 2 RKC 0
Oct 27	League	Vitesse 1 Ajax 4
Oct 30	Champions Lge	Rangers 0 Ajax 1

World Cup warning

FIFA has demanded an end to fencing – but where does that leave France? Keir Radnedge reports on the aftermath of the tragedy at Stadio Mateo Flores in Guatemala City

FIFA wants all perimeter fencing scrapped around the world in the wake of the Guatemala stadium disaster in which 81 fans were crushed to death and another 147 seriously injured.

The world governing body reacted quickly to criticism that it had not done enough to supervise safety measures and try to guard against a recurrence as football tension grows in the qualifying run-up to the 1998 World Cup finals.

The latest instructions intensify concern over the situation in France, where hooliganism is being reported on a weekly basis at top matches and where security fencing is imposed by law. France is due to host the next World Cup, in little more than 18 months.

Initially the worldwide scrapping of fencing is only a recommendation, but FIFA's executive, which next meets in Barcelona on December 7, may set a deadline by which all fencing around – at the least – World Cup stadia must be pulled down.

The Guatemala disaster, where the cause appeared to be rooted in ticket forgery and inadequate stadium control, was the fifth World Cup tie in history to be tragically scarred with major crowd fatalities. One can only fear that, as football increases in popularity in the developing nations, further similar disasters may prove tragically inevitable – however many instructions FIFA issues.

This time, in a letter to member associations, FIFA has set out the following emergency measures:

- Stadia which maintain fences for crowd control must make sure they are easily dismantled because evacuation gates had proved ineffective;
- Only tickets for numbered seats will be allowed for sale;
- Stadia capacities must be meticulously checked and verified;
- Tickets sales must be organised to prevent forgery;
- Kick-offs must not be permitted until any and all problems outside stadia have been completely resolved;
- Only the appointed FIFA commissioner has the authority to permit the match to proceed;
- The FIFA commissioner also will carry out systematic safety checks inside and outside the stadium before kick-off.

In Guatemala, stunned by the tragedy an hour before the start of a World Cup qualifier against Costa Rica, three separate inquiries have been started. One, under Special Prosecutor Selvyn Galindo, was set up to check ticket stubs for the match in question at the Mateo Flores stadium; another has been set up under the auspices of State President Alvaro Arzu and a congressional commission has also been launched to hear evidence from witnesses.

Officials of CONCACAF, the Central and North American Confederation, also have promised strict measures to try to prevent further forged tickets scandals in the region. CONCACAF president Jack Warner has created a special commission to study the problem and make recommendations.

CONCACAF general secretary Chuck Blazer said: "Counterfeiting has always been a problem but until now it has had only financial consequences. We must effectively put an end to such criminal activities."

First reports from Guatemala on October 16 listed 20 fans as having been killed. Numbers rose rapidly to 44, then 60, then 79.

Exhausted rescue workers described the catastrophic consequences of the crush at the south end of the ground. There were 154 injured fans taken to nearby hospitals and two died later, taking the final death toll to 81.

The count probably could have been even higher but many spectators in the lower section of seats, with police help, broke down a metal gate in the

perimeter fencing and squeezed out on to the pitch and to safety.

As the tragedy unfolded, fans attempted mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on some of the victims, helping the 15 overwhelmed fire-fighters. Other people stood around, waving jackets to provide air. Bodies were laid on the pitch and covered with coats.

Presidents Arzu of Guatemala and Jose Maria Figueres of Costa Rica had been due to watch the match, but neither was inside the stadium at the time. Very quickly the finger of suspicion was pointed at forged tickets and cash-in-hand bribery at the gates because it was clear that the stadium, capacity 45,000, had been full an hour before kick-off . . . and more fans were being let in at the south end. About 60,000 fans were estimated to be in the stadium when the disaster occurred.

President Arzu immediately ordered the suspension of the match, then declared a three-day period of national mourning.

The immediate aftermath offered conflicting accounts of what had sparked the fatal stampede down a staircase at the front of the south end. Some witnesses said fans had decided to leave the stadium after realising it was overcrowded. Their efforts may have sparked a general panic. Other reports suggested that the stampede may have been provoked by the detonation of a tear-gas grenade; this was later formally denied.

Further claims suggested one group of fans grew impatient at being held up at an entrance and tried to push their way in, trampling over those in front of them who had entered earlier and falling on to fans in the seats below – crushing them against the fencing.

'I was in the cheap seats and they were full. Then more people were let in. I only ran out when they began to fall on top of us' – survivor Carlos Garcia

One fan, building labourer Alberto Chamale, lost four brothers and a niece in the crush. He said that the cheap sitting areas at the south end had been packed to capacity more than an hour before the game but gatemen let in more fans until people lost their balance and began falling on others in front.

Another survivor, Carlos Garcia, said: "I was in the cheap seats and they were full. Then more people were let it. I only ran out when they began to fall on top of us."

FIFA spokesman Andreas Herren said as much as he could at the time: "Obviously this is a huge tragedy. All of us here at FIFA are shocked. We're trying to piece events together and obtain as much information as possible."

Rolando Pineda Lam, president of the Guatemala federation, insisted: "The proper number of tickets was issued, 45,800, but we are going to investigate."

That investigation began with a detailed count of all the ticket stubs to try to verify the number of correct tickets and the number of forgeries. The Guatemala government promised a report would be made public within a week, but that proved impossible.

FIFA, without waiting for the Guatemalan authorities, duly drew its own conclusions both to impress security concerns worldwide and to head off criticism that the world federation did not do enough to safeguard fans around the world.

But, as a spokesman said: "With the best will in the world, we cannot give orders to the local police and security services . . ."

Tragedies stretch back 84 years

April 5, 1902, Glasgow – 25 killed and 517 injured when the West Stand at Ibrox Park collapses during an England-Scotland international.

March 9, 1946, Bolton, England – 33 killed and 400 injured when a wall collapses at Burnden Park before an FA Cup tie between Bolton Wanderers and Stoke City.

March 30, 1955, Santiago, Chile – Six killed when 70,000 try to jam into the national stadium for the final of the South American Championship, in which Argentina beat Chile 1-0.

September 21, 1962, Libreville, Gabon – Nine killed and 30 injured when a landslide engulfs part of the stadium during an international between Gabon and Congo-Brazzaville.

May 24, 1964, Lima, Peru – 318 killed and 500 injured at the National Stadium after Argentina beat Peru in an Olympic qualifying match. Trouble breaks out when the referee disallows a Peruvian goal in the final two minutes.

June 23, 1968, Buenos Aires, Argentina – 74 killed and 150 injured after a League game between River Plate and Boca Juniors. People trying to leave are crushed against locked exits, burning paper being thrown down by celebrating fans in an upper tier.

January 2, 1971, Glasgow – 65 killed when fans try to turn back on a staircase at Ibrox Park after a late Rangers equaliser in the derby against Celtic.

March 4, 1971, Salvador, Brazil – Four killed and 1,500 injured in panic caused by a fight and a stampede in grandstand.

February 17, 1974, Cairo, Egypt – 49 killed and 50 injured as crowds attempting to enter the Zamalek stadium for a top club game break down the barriers and a wall collapes.

October 31, 1976, Yaounde, Cameroon – Two killed in fighting after a penalty is awarded to Cameroon in a World Cup qualifying tie against Congo and the Congolese keeper tries to attack the Gambian referee.

December 6, 1976, Port-au-Prince, Haiti – Six killed, including two children, at a World Cup qualifier between Haiti and Cuba. When Cuba score, Haitian fans sets off a firecracker. Fans fear gunfire and panic, knocking down a soldier, whose gun goes off and kills a small boy and girl. Further panic causes two people to be trampled to death, and one man dies jumping over a wall. The soldier commits suicide.

May 1978, Ghana – 15 killed and 35 injured when a wall collapses.

August 1979, Nigeria – 24 killed and 27 injured in a stampede following floodlight failure.

February 1981, Piraeus, Greece – 24 killed in an end-of-match stampede for the exits.

1981, Ibague, Colombia – 18 killed and 45 injured when a wall collapses in during a match between Deportes Tolima and Deportivo Cali.

1982, Cali, Colombia – 22 killed and 100 injured after drunken youths urinate from an upper tier of Pascual Guerrero Stadium, provoking a stampede below.

July 1982, Moscow – 66 killed when fans leaving the National Stadium try to re-enter the stands after a last-minute goal in a UEFA Cup tie between Spartak Moscow and Haarlem. Unofficial reports put the death toll at 340.

November 1982, Algiers – 10 killed after a concrete roof collapses inside a stadium.

November 1982, Cali, Colombia – 24 killed and 250 injured when drunken fans provoked a stampede.

May 11, 1985, Bradford, England – 56 killed and more than 200 injured when fire engulfs the main stand at Valley Parade stadium.

May 26, 1985, Mexico City – 10 trampled to death and 29 injured when they try to force an entry into a stadium to see a domestic match.

May 29, 1985, Brussels – 39 fans, mostly Italians, are killed when a wall collapses as they try to escape rioting English supporters before the Champions Cup Final between Juventus and Liverpool at Heysel Stadium.

March 10, 1988, Tripoli, Libya – 30 killed and 40 injured when a stand collapses just before half-time during a friendly international between Libya and Malta being watched by a crowd of 65,000. Fans panic after a man brandishing a knife or gun goes berserk. Hundreds rush for the exit and a wall collapses under their weight at the back of the stands.

March 12, 1988, Kathmandu – 70 killed when a sudden electric storm provokes a stampede towards locked exits at Nepal's national stadium during a match between Janakpur of Nepal and Muktijodha of Bangladesh.

April 15, 1989, Sheffield, England – 95 killed and 200 injured in Britain's worst sports disaster. Too many fans are allowed into the Leppings Lane End at Hillsborough, Sheffield, crushing others against the perimeter fence at an FA Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. The total becomes 96 when Tony Bland dies after being in a coma for almost four years.

Hillsborough, 1989

1989, Lagos, Nigeria – 12 killed and a player dies on the field during a World Cup tie between Nigeria and Angola. Nigerian winger Sam Okwaraji collapses from exhaustion in the 82nd minute.

July 8, 1990 Mogadishu – Seven killed and 18 injured after President Mohammed Siad Barre's bodyguards open fire to quell a disturbance.

January 13, 1991, Orkney, Transvaal – 40 killed and 50 injured in South Africa's worst sports disaster. A refereeing decision triggers violence and a stampede during a pre-season 'friendly' between arch-rivals Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

July 15, 1991, Nairobi – One fan is killed and 24 injured in a stampede during an African Nations Cup qualifier between Kenya and Mozambique.

May 5, 1992, Bastia, Corsica – 15 die as a temporary stand at the Furiani stadium collapses just before kick-off at the French Cup semi-final between Bastia and Marseille.

Bastia, 1992

July 19, 1992, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil – 50 injured after falling five metres from the upper tier at Maracana when part of the fencing gives way before a national championship match between Flamengo and Botafogo.

Rio, 1992

May 7, 1994, Lisbon, Portugal – One killed and 12 injured when a railing collapses at Sporting Lisbon's Alvalade stadium two hours before the kick-off of a match against FC Porto.

September 4, 1994, Monrovia, Liveria – Two killed and 26 injured when a rail breaks at the Samuel Doe stadium after Liberia's 1-0 defeat of Togo in the first leg of an African Nations Cup qualifier.

April 8, 1995, Freetown, Sierra Leone – 40 injured as the main gate collapses on fans scrambling for tickets outside the main stadium.

June 16, 1996, Lusaka, Zambia – Nine killed and 78 injured during a stampede following Zambia's victory over Sudan in a World Cup qualifier.

THE SOCCER WAR

In October 1969 a World Cup tie in which El Salvador defeat Honduras 3-2 sparks the so-called 'Soccer War' after Hondurans attack Salvadorian exiles in their country. El Salvador's government retaliates with an armed attack against Honduras. Fighting lasts a week until intervention by the Organisation of American States.

No relaxing!

Juventus coach Marcello Lippi has warned his players of the dangers of complacency as they prepare for the World Club Cup in Japan. Keir Radnedge reports

MARCELLO LIPPI has warned his Juventus players not to be complacent when they take on River Plate in the World Club Cup in Tokyo's National Stadium on November 26.

Lippi is generally satisfied with the manner in which Juve, despite having changed half the team during the summer, have embarked upon their twin challenge of retaining the European Champions Cup and regaining the Italian League title from Milan.

But not everything in the garden is rosy. The 0-0 draw against Third Division Nocerina in the Italian Cup was followed by a 1-1 draw against Roma during which The Old Lady lost her concentration in the closing minutes and conceded a last-gasp equaliser to Marco Delvecchio.

Not the ideal preparation for the ongoing Champions League series or the inter-continental tussle which lies ahead.

Lippi pulls no punches. He says: "In both matches we sat back, we were over-confident, complacent. Just because we are Juventus that is no reason to believe that our opponents will stand back and allow us to win. Quite the opposite: because we are Juventus they will fight harder to make it all the more difficult for us.

"We are improving all the time in terms of technique, tactics and match fitness. Every time I watch us play I see improvements. But we must maintain the right mental as well as physical approach."

Angelo Di Livio, who was Juventus' best player against Roma, added his own words of advice, saying: "In three matches away from home we got three draws but they should all have been victories. Maybe it's down to the youth of our team this season – we lost a lot of experience during the summer. Then again, we lack a little realism, pragmatism. It can be put right but it will take a little more time yet.

"Hopefully, what happened in the last minutes against Roma will teach us an important lesson – in the league, in the cup, in Europe and even the World."

This may be one of the last editions of the now-sanitised clashes between the club champions of Europe and South America. The top clubs of Asia and Africa want to share in the fun and games. FIFA has dabbled with the idea of a formal world club championship which would involve top clubs of the varying regions playing off in a mini-tournament at the end of each season. The idea is still in its infancy and may not come to fruition this side of the Millennium. But it would be wrong and appallingly short-sighted to believe that the likes of Zamalek of Egypt and Verdy Kawasaki of Japan will be satisfied with the role of spectators.

'Because we are Juventus they will fight harder to make it all the more difficult for us' – Marcello Lippi

It was Henri Delauney, the UEFA general secretary, who first suggested the idea of a challenge match between the champions of Europe and South America in a letter to CONMEBOL, the South American Confederation, in 1958. His idea provided the impetus for the launch of the Libertadores Cup (South American Club Cup).

Up until 1980 matches in the World Club Cup, or Intercontinental Cup as it is formally known, were played on a home and away basis, and up until 1968 points decided the winners, not the aggregate score. This meant that if the clubs won one match each or both were drawn, a decider had to be played. Until 1964 this decider had, for reasons never fully explained, to take place on the ground of the home team in the second leg, giving them a massive advantage.

Even up until 1968 the decider at least had to be played on the home club's continent!

Competition got off to a flying start in 1960, when Real Madrid met Penarol of Uruguay. Madrid had just won their fifth European Champions Cup in a row, with a 7-3 demolition of Eintracht Frankfurt, while Penarol had become the first winners of the Libertadores Cup.

The first leg, in Montevideo, produced a 0-0 draw but in the return two months later, Real Madrid pounded the Uruguayans 5-1. The Real forward line was one of the best ever, and contained Del Sol, Di Stefano, Gento and Puskas, who scored twice. A combined attendance of 200,000 saw the two matches.

Unfortunately, the subsequent games produced neither such a plethora of goals nor such interest among fans. In 1961 Penarol became the first South American winners but all too soon the World Club Cup grew notorious for bad temper and bad football. Not until the start of the 1980s was the final turned into a one-off event, when Japanese sponsors, Toyota, provided the cash to stage the event in Tokyo.

The National Stadium offers happy memories to both Juventus and River Plate. Juventus beat Argentinos Juniors on penalties in the 1985 Final and River Plate defeated Steaua Bucharest a year later. Both sides approach this year's Final having made major changes since winning their 'domestic' crown.

Juventus may have replaced the likes of Fabrizio Ravanelli and Gianluca Vialli rather more effectively than River have replaced Hernan Crespo. Even so, Lippi will remind his players: "Do not be over-confident. Do not be complacent. Do not, above all, think the match is won until the final whistle . . ."

Juve been framed . . . Juventus celebrate as coach Lippi *(inset)* gives the thunbs up

WORLD CLUB CUP FINALS

1960.....Real Madrid (Spa) bt Penarol (Uru), 0-0, 5-1
1961.....Penarol (Uru) bt Benfica (Por), 0-1, 5-0, 2-1
1962.....Santos (Bra) bt Benfica (Por), 3-2, 5-2
1963.....Santos (Bra) bt Milan (Ita), 2-4, 4-2, 1-0
1964.....Internazionale (Ita) bt Independiente (Arg), 0-1, 2-0, 1-0
1965.....Internazionale (Ita) bt Independiente (Arg), 3-0, 0-0
1966.....Penarol (Uru) bt Real Madrid (Spa), 2-0, 2-0
1967.....Racing Club (Arg) bt Celtic (Sco), 0-1, 2-1, 1-0
1968.....Estudiantes (Arg) bt Manchester United (Eng), 1-0, 1-1
1969.....Milan (Ita) bt Estudiantes (Arg), 3-0, 1-2
1970.....Feyenoord (Hol) bt Estudiantes (Arg), 2-2, 1-0
1971.....Nacional (Uru) bt Panathinaikos (Gre), 1-1, 2-1
1972.....Ajax (Hol) bt Independiente (Arg), 1-1, 3-0
1973.....Independiente (Arg) bt Juventus (Ita), 1-0
1974.....Atletico Madrid (Spa) bt Independiente (Arg), 0-1, 2-0
1975.....Not held
1976.....Bayern Munich (Ger) bt Cruzeiro (Bra), 2-0, 0-0
1977.....Boca Juniors (Arg) bt Borussia MG (Ger), 2-2, 3-0
1978.....Not held
1979.....Olimpia (Par) bt Malmo (Swe), 1-0, 2-1
1980.....Nacional (Uru) bt Nottingham Forest (Eng), 1-0
1981.....Flamengo (Bra) bt Liverpool (Eng), 3-0
1982.....Penarol (Uru) bt Aston Villa (Eng), 2-0
1983.....Gremio (Bra) bt SV Hamburg (Ger), 2-1
1984.....Independiente (Arg) bt Liverpool (Eng), 1-0
1985.....Juventus (Ita) bt Argentinos Juniors (Arg), 2-2 (4-2 on pens)
1986.....River Plate (Arg) bt Steaua Bucharest (Rom), 1-0
1987.....FC Porto (Por) bt Penarol (Uru), 2-1 (aet)
1988.....Nacional (Uru) bt PSV Eindhoven (Hol), 1-1 (7-6 on pens)
1989.....Milan (Ita) bt Atletico Nacional (Col), 1-0 (aet)
1990.....Milan (Ita) bt Olimpia (Par), 3-0
1991.....Red Star (Yug) bt Colo Colo (Ch), 3-0
1992.....Sao Paulo (Bra) bt Barcelona (Spa), 2-1
1993.....Sao Paulo (Bra) bt Milan (Ita), 3-2
1994.....Velez Sarsfield (Arg) bt Milan (Ita), 2-0
1995.....Ajax (Hol) bt Gremio (Bra), 0-0 (4-3 on pens)

● The event was called the Intercontinental Cup from 1960-79 and used a best-of-three-game format until 1968. A two-game format was instituted in 1968 until 1980, when Toyota became the sponsor, changed the format to a one-game championship and staged it in Tokyo; South American clubs have won 20 times, European clubs have won 14 times.

Playmaker . . . River's Ortega; Libertadores Cup celebrations *(below right)*

Sold down the River

Too many transfers have weakened South American chances, says Eric Weil

CLUB ATLETICO River Plate are easily Argentina's leading domestic title winners, with 24 since professional soccer began in 1931.

As such, they qualified for the Libertadores Cup 17 times but, curiously for one of South America's leading clubs, they have won it only twice – on both occasions against unlucky America of Cali (Colombia), who have now lost all their four finals.

Even more curious is the fact that for River Plate, success, or near success, has come in 10-year cycles.

In 1966, when they first participated in the tournament for South American champions and runners-up, they reached the final, but Uruguay's Penarol beat them after a play-off.

In 1976 they were losing finalists again, to Brazil's Cruzeiro, again in a play-off. They had to wait another 10 years to reach the final, winning against America, and now have repeated that feat another 10 years later.

River Plate qualified for the latest edition of the Libertadores Cup as long ago as December 1994 – two years before they face European champions Juventus for the World Club Cup in Tokyo.

This is due to the fact that the Argentinian season finishes after the start of the year's Libertadores Cup.

A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since, including team and coach changes, and River Plate have not done particularly well. After winning the 1994-95 opening championship under coach Daniel Passarella and then under his assistant, Americo Gallego, after the former took on the national team manager's job, River Plate finished 10th in the closing championship. In the following season they were seventh and then 14th out of 20 clubs.

The team now are coached by Argentina's former striker Ramon Diaz, who finished his playing career in Japan, with Yokohama Marinos, a couple of years ago. He then coached them for a short time before returning to River Plate, where he had hit the headlines as a player.

Diaz's lack of experience showed from the start and there was continual clamour for his dismissal in view of poor results, despite a strong playing staff including many internationals.

This year River Plate staked everything on the Cup, often fielding reserve teams in the League.

The players had little respect for Diaz and some went on record as saying that for Libertadores Cup matches – and specially the final – they worked out their own tactics and that Diaz did not mind. After all, he was content to stand by and collect double the bonus money.

Diaz was also in the habit of making poor substitutions and got into more arguments with his players as a result. On one occasion he was about to take off the player with the most dangerous shot when a free-kick had just been awarded, and one of the senior players was heard shouting "Nooo, don't do that" – and the substitution was not made.

But if Diaz seemed to have little to do with winning the Libertadores Cup, he cannot be entirely blamed for the poor League form with the reserves. River Plate also gladly give up players to the national team when Passarella – their former captain and coach – asks for them. And they continually sell their best players, which is hard to understand for a leading title-winner. Diaz has no say in this, but still he is blamed.

Since winning the Libertadores Cup, River Plate have sold defender Juan Gomez, midfielder Maties Almeyda, the young motor of the team, and leading scorer Hernan Crespo, as well as forwards Gabriel Amato and Gabriel Cedres.

They bought a few players, too, and made £6.8million profit on their deals, but the buys were not of the same class.

The newcomers, including strikers Julio Cruz and Chilean international Marcelo Salas, as well as midfielder Roberto Monserrat, are fitting in quite well, and River Plate made a good start to the 1996-97 season, with a 4-1-1 record.

Their only defeat in the first six games was against traditional rivals Boca Juniors (by a last-minute goal) and that may have cooked Diaz's goose. His contract finishes at the end of the year.

River Plate play elegant soccer and have for years stood out more for their individual ability than for their team work. They may lack a bit of bite or fighting spirit, although they can line up an entire team of internationals, which would include one Paraguayan (Celso Ayala), one Uruguayan (Enzo Francescoli) and one Chilean (Marcelo Salas).

Keeper German Burgos has played some blinders to save points, but also has lost some – a habit he has taken into the national team. One feels sorry for the reserve, Joaquin Irigoytia, a member of Argentina's world champion Under-20 team, who hardly gets a chance.

The defence is sometimes the weak point, although there are four internationals in Hernan Diaz, Ayala, Juan Sorin and Ricardo Altamirano.

Midfielders Roberto Monserrat, Leonardo Astrada and Sergio Berti have played at international level, but are not consistent.

Ariel Ortega plays slightly behind Enzo Francescoli and Salas or Cruz, and these players are good enough to upset any defence if they get the right service.

One theory for River Plate's poor League form was that the players had lost their drive.

Winning the Libertadores Cup earned them a reported £180,000 each. The club finished the tournament in the red . . . no wonder!

For the first leg of the final they took 22 players to Cali. With the training staff, this meant that 50 people stayed at the most expensive hotel.

The same thing happened for the quarter-finals in Lima (Peru) and semi-finals in Santiago (Chile) . . . so watch out Tokyo for a big invasion.

LIBERTADORES CUP - RIVER'S RECORD

1995: played 14, won 8, drew 4, lost 2, goals 28-12

First round group: San Lorenzo (Arg) 1-1, 0-0; Minerven (Ven) 2-1, 5-1; Caracas FC (Ven) 2-0, 4-1; Sporting Cristal (Peru) 1-2, 5-2 (agg 6-4); Quarter-finals: San Lorenzo (Arg) 2-1, 1-1 (agg 3-2); Semi finals: Universidad de Chile 2-2, 1-0 (agg 3-2); Final: America (Col) 0-1, 2-0 (agg 2-1).

Player	Pos	Age	Apps
German BURGOS	G	27	13
Joaquin IRIGOYTIA	G	20	1
Ricardo ALTAMIRANO	D	30	7
Hernan DIAZ	D	34	13
Celso AYALA	D	26	11
Eduardo BERIZZO	D	22	0
Leonardo ASTRADA	M	26	11
Sergio BERTI	M	27	0
Juan SORIN	M	20	13
Marcelo GALLARDO	M	20	7
Roberto MONSERRAT	M	28	0
Enzo FRANCESCOLI	F	35	13
Ariel ORTEGA	F	22	12
Marcelo SALAS	F	21	0
Julio CRUZ	F	22	0

RIVER PLATE – HOW THEY LINE UP

Twist or bust

The stakes are higher than ever for Super Depor. Graham Turner looks at the problems facing John Toshack

Time to deliver . . . Depor coach John Toshack

IS EUROPEAN football polarising into social classes? Is the concept of the two-speed Europe creeping into soccer? Is the pot of gold offered by TV and the Champions League splitting the rainbow into its component colours?

Rhetorical questions at a time when the old cliché about the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer is becoming more hackneyed than ever.

The situation does mean that, across European soccer, a number of clubs are making determined efforts to be rich, upper class or top-speed, whatever you care to call it. Deportivo La Coruna are a classic example. The Galicians were in the Spanish Second Division until 1991 and have never won the League title. But if there is going to a top bracket in future European football, Depor want to be in it.

Their ambitious president, Augusto Cesar Lendoiro, has splashed out £16.5million in the transfer market in a bid to consolidate the club in the big time. The budget has doubled in only two years. In the money league, Deportivo are now fourth behind Barcelona, Real Madrid and Valencia.

Lendoiro's ambitions and the sheer volume of financial commitment are easily translated into pressure for the coach, John Toshack. The club have some expensive goods and he has to make sure they produce those goods on the pitch.

Toshack arrived at the beginning of last season when fans had enjoyed their first tastes of success and were hungry for more. Under the guidance of veteran Arsenio Iglesias, Super Depor had finished third, second and second between 1993 and 1995, had won the Copa del Rey for the first time in 1995 and had produced some impressive European performances.

'In the money league, Deportivo are now fourth behind Barcelona, Real Madrid and Valencia'

UEFA Cup defeats by Eintracht Frankfurt and Borussia Dortmund were harsh outcomes to ties when they outplayed the Germans but failed to break them down.

Enter Toshack. Result: ninth place in the league, no European football and senior unrest among the natives. The Welshman's explanation to Lendoiro was that Arsenio's squad had peaked and were now on the wrong side of the hill. Hence the massive investment and the major re-shaping of the team.

One local reporter titled his preview of 96-97 *Super Depor Sunk Without Trace*. It isn't entirely true. Of the 12 players who wore the blue-and-white stripes against Valencia in 1994, when a missed penalty cost them the title, nine are still at the club. Not many of them, however, are still first-team regulars.

Tosh and Lendoiro have set about reducing the average age of an old squad by signing eight new foreigners. Consolidation among the European elite, they feel, means exploiting the Bosman ruling. At the same time, Toshack has refused to turn his back on the good housekeeping principles which he applied during his two stays at Sociedad and has tried to nurture the local talent which was going rusty in the reserves. Strikers David, Mikael and Deus all seem to have a bright future.

They might even help Toshack's team to shake off the dependence on Bebeto, sold to Flamengo during the summer. The new playing system is certainly designed to share the goals around a bit more. Depor now field four at the back, with Djukic sweeping, two Brazilians in midfield holding roles and three attack-minded midfielders behind the most advanced striker, usually Madar. This compares with the previous system of three markers plus two wing-backs; three across the middle; and one wide-ish player supporting Bebeto.

Riverside setting . . . Depor's Riazor stadium

Toshack's problem was that, under the Arsenio regime, the wing-backs had operated in very conservative roles and, much as he asked, seemed reluctant to change.

The dressing room has changed radically, and not just because of the row with the local authority which led to the players having no hot water for a couple of weeks. Portuguese and French are now the dominant languages. Four of the new signings – Songo'o, Bonnissel, Martins and Madar – came from the French League, the Moroccan Naybet was there before moving to Portugal, and an option has been taken on a sixth, Rennes' Olympic striker Silvain Wiltord.

Brazilian midfielder Flavio Conceicao has been persuaded to join Depor when the transfer window opens in December, despite fierce counter-bidding from both Real Madrid and Sevilla.

Not surprisingly, the 28,000 season-ticket holders at Riazor were slow to identify with a new-look team frequently containing only four Spaniards. Their disappointing reward for outplaying Favio Capello's Real in the opening home fixture was a 1-1 draw, but the fans soon latched on to the exciting ball-skills and scoring flair of Rivaldo and morale was boosted by two away wins which put six potentially crucial points in the bank.

First they went to Madrid and beat Atletico 2-0, then went to Seville to take on early-season pace-setters Betis, produced an impressively solid second half and ran out 2-1 winners.

Toshack is aware that only success and a return to European football will be good enough for Lendoiro and the fans. Arsenio set the bar high and if the new European-look Depor do not produce dividends on the investment, Tosh will be for the high jump.

Rivaldo

GOALKEEPERS

Jacques SONGO'O (17.3.64)
Surprise out-of-contract signing from Metz. He played third fiddle behind N'Kono and Bell in the Cameroon national team. Since arriving from Canon Yaounde in 1989, he had played only 122 French League games for Toulon, Le Mans and Metz.

Petr KOUBA (28.9.69)
A £950,000 signing from Sparta Prague on the back of his Euro 96 display and after being linked with Barcelona and Porto. Taking time to adapt and has spent most of the season on the bench.

DEFENDERS

Miroslav DJUKIC (19.02.66)
Sweeper signed from RAD Belgrade in 1990 and is about to make his 200th Spanish League appearance. Back on the international stage with Yugoslavia. Renowned for the 1994 penalty miss which cost Depor the League title.

Noureddin NAYBET (18.7.70)
Dominant, no-holds-barred central defender signed from Tosh's former club, Sporting Lisbon, for £2.3m this summer. Moroccan international, left WAC Casablanca for Nantes in 1993 and headed for Portugal a year later.

Jose Luis RIBERA (11.6.65)
Strong utility defender signed from Buros in 1991 after spells with Elbar and Sestao.

Fernando Martinez NANDO (31.5.67)
Skilful left-footed wing-back capped twice for Spain. Signed from Valencia in 1992.

Salvador Gonzalez VORO (9.10.63)
Nine caps for Spain including one against Bolivia in the 1994 World Cup. Tall, strong central defender signed from Valencia in 1993.

Francisco Jemez PACO (18.4.70)
Another strong central defender, born in the Canaries and signed in 1993 after spells with Cordoba and Rayo Vallecano.

ARMANDO Alvarez (18.7.70)
Born in Colmar, France. Out-of-contract signing from Oviedo this summer.

Jerome BONNISSEL (11.4.73)
Captain of the French Olympic team. Signed on a six-year contract for £1.75m this summer from Montpellier, where he came through the youth scheme to play 119 League games. Bought to replace Nando as left-sided wing back.

MIDFIELDERS

DONATO Gama da Silva (30.12.62)
Veteran anchor-man bought by Atletico Madrid from Vasco da Gama in 1988 and signed on a free transfer by Depor in 1993. Changed his Brazilian passport and has been capped 12 times by Spain. Member of the Euro 96 squad.

MAURO da SILVA Gomes (12.1.68)
Skilful, strong and industrious central midfielder capped 40 times by Brazil. Injury has allowed him to start only 24 games in the past two seasons.

Francisco Gonzalez FRAN (14.7.69)
The standard-bearer of the Deportivo youth scheme. Rumours of a sale this summer caused consternation in La Coruna. Super-skilled No 10 who was promoted to the first team in 1988. His problem: consistency.

Corentin MARTINS (11.7.69)
Of Portuguese origin but raised in France. Moved from his birthplace, Brest, to Auxerre in 1991 and was signed for £1.85m after playing a major role in the League and Cup double.

Fran

Rafael MARTIN VAZQUEZ (25.9.65)
Had his best season when Toshack was at Real Madrid, but hit by injury since following Tosh north in 1995. Started only two games last season.

Emilio VIQUEIRA (20.9.74)
Tall, strong local boy plucked from the reserves by Toshack last year to play a midfield holding role.

ALFREDO Santaelena (13.10.67)
Skilful, hard-working utility midfielder signed from Atletico Madrid in 1993.

Vitor Barbosa RIVALDO (19.4.72)
Club record signing for £6m from Palmeiras, where he scored 60 goals in three seasons. Attacking midfielder with original ball skills. 18 caps for Brazil.

FLAVIO CONCEICAO (12.6.74)
Signed from Palmeiras for £4m on a seven-year contract, but after the pre-season transfer deadline. Midfield anchor-man for the Brazilian Olympic team.

FORWARDS

Aitor TXIKI BEGIRISTAIN (12.8.64)
Former Toshack pupil at Real Sociedad, lured to Barcelona in 1988, moved on a free transfer to Depor in 1995 as skilful left-footed cover for Fran.

Javier MANJARIN (31.12.69)
Tricky, speedy little right-winger who came through the Sporting Gijon youth scheme and was sold to Depor for £500,000 in 1993. Three Euro 96 appearances among his nine caps for Spain.

Michael MADAR (8.5.68)
A tall, robust out-of-contract striker who joined Depor this summer from Monaco. Paris-born but played with Sochaux, Laval and Cannes, scoring 33 goals in 130 appearances.

How they line up

True blue . . . Gigi Casiraghi struggles to impress for Italy against Georgia

The whistle blows for Arrigo Saachi

Surely this is the end for Azzurri *boss, says Paddy Agnew*

SECONDS after Italy had struggled to a mightily unimpressive 1-0 home World Cup win against Georgia, Italian team coach Arrigo Sacchi was cross-examined on live television about the side's performance and about the whistles and jeers with which the crowd in Perugia had accompanied much of the second-half efforts.

Without batting an eyelid, Sacchi responded: "The whistles are the result of an orchestrated campaign (against us)."

Really? Just for a second, we thought that maybe the whistles and jeers had been prompted by yet another unconvincing Italian performance. After all, had not Italy also struggled five days earlier to secure a distinctly flattering 3-1 away win in Moldova? Unfortunately for Sacchi, the Italian media tended to agree with the discontented fans.

Many critics thought that they had written Sacchi off last June following Italy's Euro 96 elimination in England. Now, faced with dreadful performances against 'minnows' Georgia and Moldova and with a Wembley qualifier against England next on the World Cup list, all the anger inspired by the Euro debacle was rekindled, prompting renewed calls for Sacchi's departure.

Corriere Dello Sport captured the mood of the media reaction when writing: "Sacchi, Farewell – Last night in Perugia, the last chapter of Sacchi's history as team coach was written . . . when you play two games like these against Georgia and Moldova, then there's no option but to turn over a new leaf. Farewell Sacchi, with no recriminations."

Gazzetta Dello Sport took exception to Sacchi's claim that he was the victim of an orchestrated campaign, writing angrily: "We'll offer Sacchi some consolation – let him just imagine a stadium full of deaf and dumb people, the only people who would applaud him after a game like this one . . . For our part, we're waiting for Italy . . . to reacquire a national team that is both dignified and watchable."

Yes, folks, Arrigo Sacchi's future as Italian team coach is once again in doubt. Things have indeed got to a pretty pass when the Italian coach requires a police escort out of the ground following a home international. Such was the case in Perugia.

Things, too, are hardly all hunky-dory when Italian fans start to offer the celebrated 'ole' for a series of passing movements by the opposition in a World Cup qualifier. Such was the case in Perugia.

Sacchi pointed out that Georgia were a useful side and might well take points from other teams in Group Two, adding: "The real truth is that we've picked up three golden points."

Three golden points or not, the real truth may prove to be that the Georgia game represented the end of the road for Sacchi. By next month, the situation may have resolved itself following the expected election of current Italian League President Luciano Nizzola as Federation President.

Remember, Italian soccer has been without a Federation President since the resignation last August – in the wake of the European Championship debacle – of Antonio Matarrese. The lack of a Federation President, plus the size of Sacchi's salary (an annual £700,000, after tax) had mitigated against his dismissal in August.

In the wake of these latest disappointing performances, it seems that one of the new chief's first priorities will be to find a new coach. Current Under-21 coach Cesare Maldini, and the former World Cup winning goalkeeper and current Lazio President Dino Zoff are considered to be in pole position for the job. Watch this space.

Managerial troubles also struck on the League front in October with Serie A claiming its first casualty, Cagliari's Uruguyan Gregorio Perez. Four defeats and one draw in his opening six games was hardly a terrific start for Perez in his first season in Italian soccer, but it was probably the nature of the fourth defeat, 2-1 away to Lazio, rather than the overall statistics that finally blew the (admittedly not always infinite) patience of Cagliari President Massimo Cellino.

Cagliari lost to Lazio despite having a numerical advantage for nearly all the game: Lazio goalkeeper Luca Marchegiani was sent off in the fourth minute.

President Cellino, of course, is not new to the business of sacking a coach. Four seasons ago he sacked the experienced Gigi Radice after only two days of the season. Last February, even the most successful Italian coach of the post-war era, Giovanni Trappatoni, was shown the door.

As in the past, Cellino went looking for a familiar name as an emergency replacement, this time calling in former Roma coach Carlo Mazzone, who had replaced yet another sacked Cagliari coach, Massimo Giacomini, in 1991.

On his return to Sardinia, Mazzone pointed out that he had "nothing to gain and everything to lose" from having accepted the job, but immediately did his reputation no harm by pulling off a surprise 2-2 Italian Cup draw with Inter.

In the first 10 weeks of this season, Milan lost six times. Compare that with another statistic, showing that in three seasons and 102 Serie A games between 1991 and 1994, Milan lost FIVE times, and you get an idea of why critics are beginning to wonder if, finally and this time for real, Milan have come to the end of an era.

Mind you, at least they have had their all-conquering spell. Roman clubs Roma and Lazio, both eliminated from the UEFA Cup and inconsistent in the League thus far, never have had an 'era'. Indeed, Roma last won the title in 1983, Lazio in 1974.

Given they way they are playing at the moment, neither side from the Eternal City risks improving that record this season at least.

Mancini may be moving

SAMPDORIA fans are upset because Roberto Mancini is likely to leave Genoa for Milan – after scoring twice in his 400th senior game.

Inter are keen to add to their forward strength, and Mancini may well be tempted, despite protests at the training grouns by fans anxious to keep him.

Udinese's Egyptian Hazem Emam, unwisely nicknamed the 'Maradona of the Pyramids' , has had a difficult non-start in Italian soccer. Then, when he was sent on early in the second half against Perugia, he must have thought that finally his chance had come.

Seven minutes later, Hazem was back on the bench, in tears and with his shirt pulled over his head to hide his disappointment. No sooner had he got on than Fabio Rossitto was sent off, forcing Udinese coach Alberto Zacheroni to shuffle his cards, and Hazem was replaced by a more defensive player, Ghanaian Mohammed Gargo.

Better luck next month, Hazem.

Making an impact, slowly

Mark Gleeson on the Africans in Italy

ITALY has taken longer than most European countries to fall under the spell of African charisma, but Serie A, B and C are now beginning to beat to the dark continent's drum.

George Weah's influence at Milan is perhaps the catalyst. He helped to win the championship in his first season and took the awards as the World Footballer of the Year, African Footballer of the Year and European Footballer of the Year a few months after joining the club.

Since the long-standing ban on foreign players was lifted in 1981, Italy's shopping focus shifted dramatically with the flavour of the day; initially from South Americans to Eastern Europeans, then to countries such as England and back to the Latins.

Africans never got a look-in despite the emergence of Cameroon as a threat at the World Cup in Italy, Algeria's earlier performances at the Mundial in Spain, and the growing tide of Africans competing in other western European nations.

Francis Zahoul, an obscure Ivorian International who had a mediocre career in France, was the only African representation for the first 10 years of *stranieri,* but was considered a flop at Ascoli, where he played only 11 games. Roger Mendy was the second African import, but fareed no better at Pescara.

Three-time African Footballer of the Year Abedi Pele was the first African to sign with a high-profile Italian club, Torino. He arrived, aged 30th, two seasons ago. The impression was favourable and almost immediate and he was soon chosen as team captain, an achievement of which he was immensely proud.

Sunday Oliseh arrived in the same season after competing in the World Cup in the United States for Nigeria, but he was always going to have an uphill task with Reggiana. What was fast becoming an African relegation curse struck again last season when Torino went down. Abedi's form dipped in the final stages of the season after an injury sustained in the African Nations Cup in South Africa.

But despite this increasing phenomenon, Italian agents swarmed to South Africa in January to seek new talent for the 1996-97 season.

Augustine Sim of Cameroon joined Torino and teenage Sierra Leone international Kewulay Conteh went to Atalanta. Weah, of course, had gone to Milan.

Inter bought another Sierra Leonean, Mohamed Kallon, the youngest ever international, but 'parked' him at Lugano in Switzerland where he is still competing with another Inter signing, Christopher Kanu (younger brother of Inter's Nwankwo).

The Nations Cup led to three more signings for this year – South Africans Mark Fish (Lazio) and Eric Tinkler (Cagliari) and the Egyptian Hazem Imam for Udinese.

This season, Africans have been flooding into Italy, particularly now that Serie B clubs are dabbling in the foreign market.

The 17-year-old Cameroonian Pierre Niend Wdome was bought by newly-promoted Vicenza but has yet to make his debut, while Nii Lamptey (ex-Aston Villa and Coventry) is at Venezia in Serie B. South African striker Phil Masinga, once at Leeds, has just signed for Salanitana, and Nigerian Onye Precious has played for Cosenza, on loan from Reggiana, who have several other Africans on their books.

Even Serie C is beginning to twinkle with African talent in the form of a Gabonese duo, Pierre Aubame, a veteran midfielder, and striker Guy-Roger Nzamba.

THE PLAYERS

NAME	COUNTRY	CLUB	SEASONS	APPS (GLS)
SERIE A				
Abedi Pele AYEW	GHANA	Torino	94-95	32 (12)
			95-96	17 (3)
Kwame AYEW	Ghana	Lecce	93-94	14 (3)
			94-95 (Ser. B)	20 (4)
Kawullay CONTEH	Sierra Leone	Atalanta	95-96	2 (0)
Mark FISH	South Africa	Lazio	96-97	-
Mohamed GARGO	Ghana	Udinese	96-97	-
Hazem IMAM	Egypt	Udinese	96-97	-
Nwankwo KANU	Nigeria	Inter Milan	96-97	-
Roger MENDY	Senegal	Pescara	92-93	16 (1)
			93-94 (Ser. B)	17 (2)
Sunday OLISEH	Nigeria	Reggiana	94-95	30 (1)
Augustine SIMO	Cameroon	Torino	95-96	5 (0)
Eric TINKLER	South Africa	Cagliari	96-97	-
George WEAH	Liberia	Milan	95-96	26 (11)
Pierre Niend WOME	Cameroon	Vicenza	96-97	-
Francois ZAHOUI	Ivory Coast	Ascoli	81-82	11 (0)
SERIE B				
Nii LAMPTEY Odartey	Ghana	Venezia	96-97	-
Phil MASINGA	South Africa	Salanitana	96-97	-
Jean-Marc MBENTI	Cameroon	Venezia	96-97	-
Onye PRECIOUS	Nigeria	Cosenza	96-97	-
SERIE C				
Pierre AUBAME	Gabon	Triestina	96-97	-
Guy-Roger NZAMBA	Gabon	Triestina	96-97	-

Pro-file Marco Simone

Club Milan
Born January 7, 1969
Previous clubs Como, Virescit
International caps 3 (0 goals)
Honours Italian League 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996; Champions Cup 1990, 1994; European Supercup 1995, World Club Cup 1989, 1990

IF Milan striker Marco Simone ever happens to tune his satellite television on to Spanish soccer, you can rest assured that there will be one side he will NOT be rooting for this season – Real Madrid.

The reason for Simone's aversion to Real Madrid has nothing to do with historic Castillian-Catalan rivalries in neighbouring Spain but rather everything to do with the current coach of Real Madrid, one Fabio Capello, coach to Milan for five seasons between 1991 and 1996.

Simone, 27, has an old score to settle with Capello. When he joined Milan in 1989, he accepted that he would struggle to win a place in a side then dominated by the great Dutchmen Van Basten and Gullit. In subsequent seasons, too, he accepted that he would have to fight hard for his place.

His difficult position on the edge of the Milan side in his first five seasons is illustrated by the fact that he played in only 88 of a possible 170 Serie A games. All of that Simone accepted, albeit reluctantly.

However, by the end of a 1994-95 season which saw him finish as the club's leading goalscorer, he could have been forgiven for believing that he had finally established himself. Simone takes up the story.

"At the beginning of last season, I started off as someone who had just scored 17 league goals the year before. I know that nothing can be taken for granted but it's also only fair to give whoever has done well for you a chance to keep up the good work.

"They could have played me in 10 games and maybe I wouldn't have scored a goal and they could have dropped me then. But that's not the way it went. Even before the curtain went up, it was decided that I wouldn't be playing. Capello drew up the starting grid and I found myself on the back row.

"Capello didn't behave correctly. I never had the impression, with him, of having the same chance as the others. He lacked tact, respect and manners."

Simone would appear to have a lot on his mind. However, so far this season, he has been talking with his boots, too. His attacking partnership with Liberian George Weah has been about the only bright star in an otherwise unusually dull Milan firmament.

Last season, the much heralded, arrival of Roberto Baggio at Milan complicated life for Simone. There were times when, one suspects, Baggio was picked purely for commercial reasons.

This season, faced with a straight choice between Baggio and Simone, Milan's new coach Oscar Tabarez has opted unequivocally for Simone.

Simone's time has finally come.

Something of a boy wonder with then Serie A side Como in 1988-89, Simone attracted the attention of then Milan coach Arrigo Sacchi, who persuaded the club to buy him.

Curiously, Sacchi, in his current role of Italy coach, has tended to overlook Simone. He may grumble but, despite the problems, Simone has an impressive list of honours in eight seasons with Milan. Others might settle for less.

Now involved in a much publicised relationship with glamorous model, Carla Liotto, he considers himself a more mature man. He talks about wanting children, his re-enrolment at university and a possible career after football in public relations.

In the meantime, however, he still has a few points to make on the pitch.

PADDY AGNEW

Politics 1 Football 0

The fierce battle for television rights could have dangerous repercussions for the game. Graham Turner reports

DO WE KEEP politics out of football or football out of politics? Spanish soccer has become a quagmire of shifting sands with precious little firm ground.

The written media have been sucked so far into the vested interests of the Great TV War that even the sports papers are filling up with articles which carry no byline and which simply toe the holding company's party line. Sports editors are being issued with three-line whips by the media barons and the truth has become the proverbial needle in the haystack. Everybody claims to be telling it, but most of the claims are unfounded.

Thank the Lord for Ronaldo, for Mijatovic, for Stoichkov, for Suker, for Capello, for Robson and the chosen few still capable of making us think about football instead of all the skulduggery.

While the war lords were filling the sports pages with mustard gas, Barcelona were averaging 3.6 goals per game, Capello's Real Madrid were getting an impressive act together and Toshack's Deportivo were hinting that they might have enough stamina to stay the pace at the top.

For regular readers, the TV war, triggered off by *Antena 3*'s massive bid to muscle in on televised football, is nothing new – to the extent where one is tempted to apologise for mentioning it again. But month after month it has dominated headlines and, even though simplified overviews are dangerous, it would be wrong of *WORLD SOCCER* not to record a situation which could change the shape of the Spanish game.

Basically, half the First Division clubs have signed unilateral contracts with *Antena 3* while the other half have thrown in their lot with either *Canal+* or one of the six regional channels. *Tele 5* has been pushed out of the soccer market and state-run *TVE* is hanging on to the Spanish national team and is still a rights-holder for UEFA Champions League fixtures.

Side show . . . players like Predrag Mijatovic bring a welcome relief from the politics

The national team are therefore being rubbished by the channels who are interested in focusing interest on the club games which they screen.

Behind *Antena 3* is the Grupo Zeta, headed by Antonio Asensio, which controls various written media, including the Barcelona sports daily, *Sport*. Behind *Canal+* is the Prisa holding group which controls Spain's biggest-selling daily *El Pais* and the Madrid sports daily *AS*. Skirmishing on the fringes is a Barcelona-based group which controls the conservative *La Vanguardia* and sports daily *El Mundo Deportivo*.

Also in the ring are the regional TV stations grouped under the 'Forta' umbrella and who controversially decided to cede part of their rights – valid until 1998 – so that *Antena 3* could screen a game on Monday evenings. This prompted a Prisa company, Sogecable, to file corruption charges against the president of the Spanish FA.

Legally the regional stations had to vote unanimously to cede those rights. A document signed by the director of sport at Catalunya's *TV3* claimed that the vote had been unanimous. Within hours, *Canal Sur* of Andalusia and *ETB* in the Basque country protested that they objected strongly.

The public wonder why the regional channels have authorised live transmissions which bite a massive slice out of their Monday evening audiences and threaten to slash their advertising revenue by some £15m per year.

Two days after *Canal Sur* registered their disapproval, Ruiz De Lopera, the president of Betis – one of the *Antena 3* clubs – banned their cameras and microphones and engaged club stewards on a witch-hunt round the Benito Villamarin when a *Canal Sur* radio reporter began transmitting the match against Rayo Vallecano from the terraces.

At this point *El Pais* decided to blow the whistle. The campaign by *TV3 Catalunya* to railroad the *Antena 3* project through all the official organisations was understandable, they claimed, because Jordi Pujol, the president of Catalunya and therefore in the position of major influence over Catalan government-backed *TV3*, was giving support to Antonio Asensio in his campaign to put *Antena 3* and the Grupo Zeta in the soccer – and media – driving seat, allegedly in exchange for pledges to strengthen Catalunya's position within the media, currently dominated by Madrid-based holdings.

Pujol's political party, CiU, has entered into a coalition agreement which allows Jose Maria Aznar's Partido Popular to govern Catalunya with a parliamentary majority. Both parties are accused of exercising their control over the state-run regional channels in favour of *Antena 3*.

El Pais also claims that the contracts signed by the clubs are not, in fact, with *Antena 3* but with another company within Grupo Zeta, called GMA. This company, with a share capital of £50,000, entered into contracts valued at £500m.

Without going into details of the dozen or so lawsuits generated by the TV war, the bottom line is that the relationships between the clubs affiliated to *Antena 3* and the others have deteriorated so rapidly that the whole future of the Spanish

Barcelona's 20-year-old Brazilian striker Ronaldo has made a sensational start to his career in Spain but he is not letting the success go to his head. "I want to be soccer's good boy," he says. "Drugs are out, and training is in."

Spain's most expensive player (at $20 million) is *La Liga*'s leading scorer and you cannot switch on a television set without seeing replays of Ronaldo's goals. The most outstanding so far came in Barcelona's 5-0 win against Compostela. Ronaldo stole a ball 40 yards from goal and weaved past four defenders, one clinging to his shirt, to score.

Brazilians are still drooling over another goal, when Ronaldo left a Lithuanian defender and goalkeeper sitting on the ground while he prevented the ball from going out before waltzing in to nonchalantly beat the keeper. It was his third goal of the game in Brazil's 3-1 friendly victory over Lithuania.

Other Ronaldo highlights since then include two goals in Barça's 8-0 humiliation of Logrones and a thrilling hat-trick in the 3-2 win against Valencia. We have not heard the last of this boy – by a mile.

League as we know it is at stake. Jesus Samper, chairman of the Lija Profesional de Futbol, has resigned and there could be a good deal more blood-letting in sporting, media and political arenas before there can be any realistic hopes of a lasting peace.

What's more, the clans of Machiavellis manoeuvring in the wings are distracting the actors. Players and coaches are starting to find that media reporting is tinged by company policy. Some clubs are criticised whatever they do.

Coaches who have just landed in Spanish football are perplexed, and none more so than Bobby Robson who, apart from scratching his head in bewilderment at all the media mayhem, is having to contend with the pro-Cruyff lobby assembled by the Dutch coach during his eight-year sojourn at Nou Camp.

Cruyff offers no middle ground to the media. He regards reporters as being either for him or against him and his regime was given unconditional support by journalists in key positions within *TV3* and the written press. The manner of Cruyff's dismissal sparked a campaign to discredit the man who sacked him – club president Josep Lluis Nunez – and the way to attack Nunez is to attack Cruyff's replacement, Robson.

At the time of writing, Barça were top, unbeaten and scoring at such a rate that, should they be capable of sustaining it, they would smash the all-time record of 107 League goals set by John Toshack's Real Madrid in 1989-90. That has not stemmed the flow of criticism and disruptive reports of dressing-room unrest. Politics 1 Football 0.

The fans have rejoiced in some spectacular football. Ronaldo's third goal in the 5-0 thrashing of Compostela was such a compendium of footballing virtues that, if you have not already seen it, try to get hold of a video. The 8-0 win over Logrones, newly-promoted but hitherto unbeaten away and winners in Valencia on their previous outing, was the fifth in Barça's history and the first since Racing were pulverised in 1962.

Fabio Capello is suffering nine parts of the same at Real Madrid, although the pro-Valdano school is less aggressive in its reporting than the Johan clan. Amid attacks on his more prosaic approach, the 6-1 defeat of Real Sociedad demonstrated that Davor Suker – who hit his first hat-trick for the club – and Predrag Mijatovic are getting their act together.

The same cannot be said for Atletico Madrid, whose 3-1 defeat in Valencia, after the Champions League reverse against Borussia Dortmund, left them nine points adrift of the leaders.

Jose Luis Caminero's absence for a further month with a muscle injury has subtracted some part from Atletico's midfield play.

Valencia, with Luis Aragones and Romario still at loggerheads, have proved, at home and in Europe, that they can still be a formidable side. Romario exasperated the coach still further by oversleeping and arriving 90 minutes late for training. He was told he could arrive 90 minutes late for subsequent fixtures, and promptly went back to Flamengo on loan. Few will be surprised if that becomes permanent.

Party night in Almendralejo

EXTREMADURA, the little club from Almendralejo, refused point-blank to indulge in a summer spending spree, and the side who grabbed promotion last season started with seven straight defeats.

An eighth was going to give them a share of Zaragoza's all-time negative record and, as fate would have it, Zaragoza were opponents No 8. They kept their proud record to themselves by losing 2-1, with Igor Gluscevic heading the two goals which gave Extremadura their historic win and sparked night-long celebrations in Almendralejo, described by locals as "better than when we were promoted".

The defeat left Zaragoza in 18th place and the credit gained by Victor Fernandez during last season's European campaign running out fast. Nayim, hero of Parc des Princes, has been dropped from the starting line-up and, although patches of impressive attacking play are still visible, the side suffer from lapses of concentration which have cost points. Referees provide the obvious scapegoats and the club went so far as to request the repetition of the last 22 minutes of their 5-3 defeat by Barcelona.

The scoreline was 3-2 when Fernando Couto was cuffed on the back of the head by Chucho Solana. Couto added some top-spin to his sack-of-potatoes routine; the linesman called the ref across and belied the new definition of 'referee's assistant' by telling his superior to show the red card to . . . Xavier Aguado. Result? Death-threats for the linesman and a replay demand, which was turned down.

Neither Aguado nor Solana was punished for the incident, as TV pictures showed clearly the mistaken identity and the play-acting. Sadly, written-press reporting is less reliable, with the sports pages now all too comparable with the political columns. First you read it. Then you take into account where you read it. During the Spanish media war, a picture really is worth more than a thousand words.

GRAHAM TURNER

Pro-file Alfonso

Club Real Betis
Born September 26, 1972, in Madrid
Previous clubs Castilla, Real Madrid
International debut September 1992, v England
International caps 17 (6 goals)
Honours Spanish League 1995, Spanish Cup 1993

AFTER a seemingly interminable transfer saga, Spain striker Perez Munoz Alfonso has cut the umbilical cord tying him to Real Madrid.

He has settled down at Betis, a club rapidly metamorphosing from also-rans in their own town (move over Sevilla) into what Jorge Valdano describes as "genuine title challengers".

For so long described as 'the next big thing' at Real Madrid, where he was next in line variously behind Hugo Sanchez and Emilio Butragueno, Ivan Zamorano and Raúl, the 24-year-old Alfonso could be forgiven a wry smile at his latest nickname. Such is his ability to lose his markers in a crowded penalty box that Betis fans have taken to calling him the Invisible Man.

Despite his peripheral role in Madrid's 1995 Championship-winning campaign (he started only five games) Alfonso was so distraught when the club first suggested he pack his bags and head south that he cried at a press conference.

The capital-born kid may not have fulfilled his promise, but his skill and an unusually close rapport with the fans – he is one of the few players to have openly courted the infamous *Ultras Sur* – meant that Madrid insisted a buy-back clause be inserted in his contract, just in case.

A goal-filled 95-96 season at Betis was enough for Alfonso to establish himself as first-choice centre-forward in national coach Javier Clemente's team and persuade Madrid to exercise that £1.75million clause. Yet 45 days and a handful of pre-season friendlies later, Alfonso was on his way back to Betis.

Real coach Fabio Capello is a self-acknowledged Alfonso fan, but the presence of Suker, Mijatovic and Raúl, and a £5.9m cheque from Betis, were enough to convince Real to cash in.

In the early 1990s, a financially-stricken Betis were in trouble. The club's change of fortune dates back to 1992 and the emergence of Manuel Ruiz De Lopera, president and effective owner of Seville's traditionally working-class club.

In 1994, Betis escaped from the Second Division and in 1995 they finished third and qualified for Europe after an 18-year absence. This summer, the club splashed out some £20m on players, notably Alfonso and Finidi George from Ajax.

Ruiz De Lopera is the kind of picturesque character only a club as eccentric as Real Betis Balompie could produce. Legend has it that he started off selling souvenirs outside the Benito Villamarin stadium; now he is a multi-millionaire. And the ever-so-slight but oh-so-skilful Alfonso is the jewel in his Andalusian crown.

"I feel like a suitcase," Alfonso said on leaving the capital for good. But this time he shed no tears. With a double-your-money contract, Finidi and Jarni to provide service from the wings, and hero-status at Betis guaranteed, why should he?

JEFF KING

Pro-file Giovane Elber

WILL THIS be Giovane Elber's last season stylishly and effectively leading the line at Stuttgart? The Brazilian sharpshooter is in the most potent goalscoring form of his career, and has a posse of leading continental clubs on his trail. The smart money must be on him waving 'Auf Wiedersehen' to Stuttgart.

Elber is a front-man of rare gifts, a clinical taker of chances and a superb technician, whose repertoire of skills undoubtedly puts him in the genius category. Here is a player capable of juggling the ball several times in the air with his back to goal before spinning and volleying home. While mere mortals gasp open-mouthed at his improvisation and audacity, it's all in a day's work for the Brazilian.

"Marking Elber is 90 minutes of trouble," admits Dortmund and Germany stopper Jurgen Kohler. "What a slippery customer. Thankfully not all opponents are such a handful as him. The problem is you never know what he is going to do next. He has a magical touch and can produce the totally unexpected at any moment. He is so tricky, so elusive.

Club VfB Stuttgart
Born July 23, 1972, in Londrina, Brazil
Previous clubs FC Londrina, Grasshopper Zurich
Honours World Youth Cup runner-up 1991, Swiss Cup 1994

"There is a lot of showmanship about his play. But he doesn't abuse it. The bottom line is that he is a great finisher. He is worth 20 goals a season to his club."

Certainly Stuttgart would not be challenging for the Bundesliga without the attacking partnership of Elber and rookie German international Fredi Bobic. Intelligently supplied by Bulgarian Krassimir Balakov, the Elber-Bobic tandem represents the ideal forward-line combination. Few Bundesliga defences have found the antidote to the aerial threat of Bobic and the mobility and guile of Elber.

The knee ligament injury which sidelined him for most of the 94-95 campaign is now just a bad memory. It was his first season in Stuttgart colours following his move from Grasshopper Zurich. Last season he managed 16 strikes and the way he is tucking away chances at the moment, Elber is on course for an even better haul this term.

"I played with Giovane Elber at Grasshopper and I can honestly say I have never come across anyone with so much natural talent," says Swiss international defender Ramon Vega. "He has it all. The flair, the shooting power in either foot and he is a good header of the ball into the bargain.

"The Bundesliga is not an easy place to get goals on a regular basis. Defenders are pretty tough. But Elber seems to have the measure of them. That, for me, is proof of his top-quality."

It was Milan who brought Elber to Europe after spotting him turning on the style at the 1991 World Youth Cup. But the Milanese thought they could do without him and loaned him to Grasshopper. Giovane never did get to play in Serie A, instead enjoying three productive seasons in Switzerland. Milan might just be regretting they let the Brazilian wizard go.

NICK BIDWELL

Berti's bonus

The national team are doing just fine, but there's a new query over Klinsmann, says Arthur Rotmil

EUROPEAN champions Germany started their World Cup qualifying campaign with a thumping 5-1 away win over Armenia.

With main group rivals Portugal already beaten once and dropping points in a draw, the omens are good for coach Berti Vogts and his squad.

The Germans have only lost one World Cup qualifier, back in 1985, to Portugal – by 1-0 in Stuttgart.

Vogts, who nominated five newcomers in an extended squad, was forced to replace several key players. Matthias Sammer, Thomas Helmer, Steffen Freund, Mario Basler, Heiko Herrlich, Andy Moller and Christian Ziege were all absent through injury.

But such is Germany's strength in depth that they could field a side capable of winning 5-1 away, even though it was against weak opponents. And they did not need any special preparations – four days before the games there was a full Bundesliga programme.

One of the goals in Armenia was scored by Jurgen Klinsmann, the recently maligned striker who has been having problems at club level. He has been substituted several times, but Klinsmann, who has now represented his country 91 times, is still captain and No. 1 choice.

Klinsmann has been the subject of renewed transfer speculation, but says: "There is no crisis, just a normal loss of form which can afflict anybody. I have no quarrel with Bayern and I am proud to play for such a big club."

Three days after the international, Klinsmann scored two goals in Bayern's 4-2 away win over Koln.

Insiders claim that one of the reasons for his disenchantment with the current situation, and the persistent rumours, is the fact that details of his contract have been leaked to the media. Apparently there is a clause in his agreement that he can leave Bayern before June 30, 1997. Yet Bayern's general manager Uli Hoeness insists: "Klinsmann's contract is valid to 1998 and he is staying with us."

Other sources claim that he already has agreed terms for a return to London, with Chelsea. "The most important thing now is to restore peace within the club," he says. "But the atmosphere within Bayern will never be calm. It has something to do with the size and make-up of this institution."

After Klinsmann left Tottenham he had a superlative first season with Bayern. He was the Bundesliga's second best scorer with 16 goals, and in the victorious UEFA Cup campaign he established a European seasonal record with 15 goals. He also scored eight for the national side.

The Bundesliga's surprise leaders are VfB Stuttgart, for whom Bobic and the Brazilian Giovane Elber *(see profile, left)* have been in top form.

VfB's new team manager Joachim Low was promoted when Rolf Fringer left to manage the Swiss national side, and is proving a shrewd tactician. The club last won the title four years ago, but at the moment they are confounding the experts who predicted a duel between Dortmund and Bayern.

On song . . . Klinsmann closes in on Armenia

Dortmund have suffered from injuries to eight players, but even this has not hampered their progress in the Champions League. They are on course for a quarter-final place for the second year running.

Bayern reached the third round of the DFB Cup by beating Borussia Monchengladbach away, 2-1. Two forwards who failed to make the grade in the English lower divisions are in the news here. Striker Uwe Fuchs, released by Millwall, is proving a hit with Arminia Bielefeld, while Russian international Sergei Yuran is helping Fortuna Dusseldorf to rise from mid-table.

Midfielder Jens Dowe (pronounced Doh-veh), who fell out with Hamburg manager Felix Magath, has joined Wolves on loan.

On the managerial front, Schalke fired Jorge Berger and replaced him with Dutchman Huub Stevens, who won the League, Cup and UEFA Cup as a player.

Berger has been sacked eight times in his career, five times in the old GDR. He was Schalke's 25th boss in 28 years.

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Candela's light shines bright

Andre Duclos on an impressive new arrival in Aime Jacquet's national side

"WE HAD a good evening, because we incorporated youngsters who have talent." Thus spoke French national team manager Aime Jacquet after his patchwork side surprisingly thrashed Turkey 4-0 in a home friendly.

A deluge of absences forced Jacquet to experiment, and how well it worked out. He did not even need to recall Eric Cantona, though, for all his honeyed words about him, this must have seemed a formidable snub.

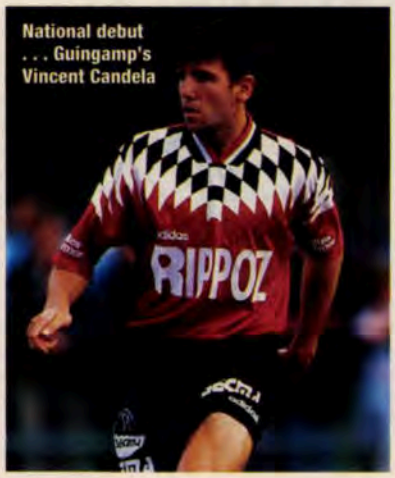
None did better for France than a previously untrumpeted player, 23-year-old Vincent Candela of Guingamp, an untrumpeted club. He replaced Lamouchi after 23 minutes and transformed the French team with his drive. Candela, previously with Montpellier and Toulouse, an unexpected star of the French Olympic team, a defensive player who loves to go forward, followed up his success with France by scoring the only goal of Guingamp's match against Lyon; only the third of his career so far.

With beguiling modesty, Candela admitted that the idea of rubbing shoulders with the likes of Laurent Blanc, best French player on the field against Turkey, and Marcel Desailly, who was not fit, scared him a little. That certainly did not show once he was on the field.

But there was, as he said, the consolation of having played alongside the goalkeeper, Fabien Barthez, at Toulouse, while at the Olympics he shared a room with another newish cap, Robert Pires.

Candela is the first Guingamp player ever to be capped for France. "It's thanks to this club that I have been picked," he says, gratefully. "Thanks to our good run last season. I have made progress.

"What advice did [the manager] Francis Smerecki give me, before I left? He has been giving me advice for the last year and a half. It's on the defensive level that he has helped me most. And he has calmed me down a bit."



National debut . . . Guingamp's Vincent Candela

Didier Deschamps, the man whom Eric Cantona, to Jacquet's fury, arrogantly dismissed as "a water carrier" after Juventus had so comprehensively beaten Manchester United in Turin, had an outstanding match. If Cantona sees him as a French Gunga Din, that is no skin off Didier's nose. After all, who's playing for France now, and who isn't?

An unexpected French star of the Bundesliga with Karlsruhe, and one very popular with the local ladies, is Marc Keller. He was signed from Strasbourg in the close season, is a right-sided midfielder, physically powerful and increasingly eager to join in the attack. Keller has had a new lease of life with Karlsruhe. His performance in the UEFA Cup game against Rapid Bucharest, when he was not only the best man on the field but managed to score twice, was exceptional.

Keller grew up an Alsatian, in Colmar, and had five years with Mulhouse before he joined Strasbourg. "I thought I would settle down well here," he said, after the Rapid game. "I am regenerating myself, and from here I can re-establish my connection with the international team." He has half a dozen caps, and at 28 surely should not be forgotten; gift horses should not be looked in the mouth.

"I wasn't picked for the last European tournament," he says, "because my image was obscured by Strasbourg's crisis. But I profited from it by at last giving myself a long seaside holiday with my fiancée, Sabrina. We went to Turkey. But now our national team manager can't ignore my rebirth in the Bundesliga."

Winnie Schaefer, the Karlsruhe manager, says: "He is a lad with great personality. Having discovered and signed him has been a very fortunate stroke for us, like winning a lottery. Marc made a great contribution to our qualification for the UEFA Cup."

Auxerre depleted by departures abroad but forever able to rise from their apparent ashes, have given a fine account of themselves both in the Championship and above all in the Champions League.

Deniaud and Diomede have been a formidable attacking pair, Henna and Violeau, neither of them a product of Guy Roux's youth scheme, are a large plus in midfield.

They have been three years with Auxerre since Violeau arrived from Niort, Henna from Mulhouse, and seemed to be rivals for the role of defensive midfielder. Instead both have been playing, and they have flourished.

Neither may be a star. Both are valuable.

Pro-file Sonny Anderson

Anderson 'Sonny' Da Silva
Club Monaco
Born September 19, 1970, Goiatuba, Brazil
Previous clubs Vasco da Gama (Bra), Guarani (Bra), Servette (Swi), Marseille
International caps None
Honours None

MONACO fans can always rely on two things. The patronage of the principality's royal family and goals from their ace Brazilian hit-man Sonny Anderson.

Anderson's contribution to the Monaco cause since signing from Olympique Marseille in the summer of 1994 has been immense. With 11 goals in his first season in Monte Carlo – a figure restricted by a long absence due to knee trouble – and 21 strikes last term, Sonny is very much the *Monegasque* cutting edge, a frontrunner blessed with explosive shooting, delicate touch and a feline-like grace when running with the ball. Yet another virtuoso forward made in Brazil.

The fact that Monaco's second-best goalscorer last term, Mickael Madar, only achieved eight strikes speaks volumes for Anderson. No wonder Monaco president Jean-Louis Campora seems to spend an awful lot of his time warning off would-be suitors of Sonny.

"Sonny isn't just a finisher of chances," insists his Monaco team-mate Franck Dumas. "Sure, he has this instinctive talent for putting the ball in the back of the net. But there is so much more to his game than that.

"He uses his wide range of skills for the good of the team as a whole. He is a selfless player. Sonny works hard for the team and is just as happy to set up a goal for a teammate as to score himself. You know he has all the tricks in the world, but you will not catch him playing to the gallery.

"As well as that amazing Brazilian ball-playing ability, he is a disciplined pro too. I don't think there can be many better strikers in European football. It's great to have someone of his special talents on our side."

It was eight years ago that a Monaco side coached by Arsene Wenger and inspired on the pitch by midfield general Glenn Hoddle clinched their last French league title – despite having such world-class performers as George Weah, Enzo Scifo and Jurgen Klinsmann on their books, the club have never proved able to scale those heights since. Anderson, though, believes this could be Monaco's year in the Gallic championship race.

"Yes, Paris St Germain have opened up a lead at the top of the table, but they haven't always appeared convincing," he says. "We held them to a goalless draw at the Parc des Princes early in the season and I don't look at them as being superior to us in any way. We are a little off the pace, but I still think we can be champions.

"Sometimes we can be our own worst enemy. We can be inconsistent. But provided we remedy that, we will be in contention for the title. I was a French championship runner-up with Marseille a couple of years ago and third with Monaco last season. I'm desperate to be on a title-winning side."

Given his goalscoring exploits in French football, it is quite startling Sonny has yet to make his senior debut for Brazil. But according to his Monaco coach Jean Tigana, Anderson's dream of a call-up to the *Selecao* is perfectly within his reach.

"Ever since Sonny exploded on the scene here with Marseille there has been plenty of talk about him being picked for his country," says Tigana. "But nothing has happened. It has been frustrating for him because he is a genuine international class player.

"He deserves to be part of the Brazilian set-up. He would be a sensation at that level. What's more, I'm sure the experience of international football would make him an even better player and it's quite a thought as he is already a devastating striker."

NICK BIDWELL

Payback time

Newcastle at last got one over rivals Manchester United with a 5-0 victory at St James' Park, easing the Charity Shield pain

High fives . . . Albert *(right)* takes the plaudits after adding the fifth goal against United

REVENGE, they say, is a dish best enjoyed cold. Imagine, then, the joy in the North East as Newcastle thrashed Manchester United 5-0, two months after Kevin Keegan's side had performed so abysmally in the Charity Shield encounter at Wembley.

In a remarkably candid interview after the game they have dubbed 'Howay 5-0', Keegan admitted that his side's failure at Wembley had been a major factor in their spectacular success this time round. His players knew that ordinary folk had spent hard-earned money to travel to London to see them play, and were determined not to let them down again.

The result put Newcastle five points ahead of Manchester United, but Keegan was quick to quash all talk of the title at this early stage (remember, Newcastle relinquished a 12-point lead last season).

Then, after such a stirring victory, Newcastle managed to lose 2-0 at Leicester City, hardly the sort of result you would expect from the champions-elect. Doom-mongers will point to Alan Shearer's absence through injury as the cause, and it will be a big test of Newcastle's strength in depth as they face up to a month without the world's most expensive player.

Stranger still was Manchester United's 6-3 defeat at bogey-team Southampton. That made it 11 goals conceded in two League games (for the first time since 1930), with Turkish champions Fenerbahce making it a dirty dozen four days later with a 1-0 Champions League win at Old Trafford. One team poised to take advantage in the League is Arsenal, yet to lose at home and whose only away defeat was at Anfield. Arsene Wenger has yet to put his stamp on what is effectively still Bruce Rioch's side, but the Gunners are top of the table and looking in good form. Patrick Vieira's inclusion has breathed new life into the midfield, and Dennis Bergkamp marked his return from injury with a goal in the 3-0 defeat of Leeds United, thus spoiling George Graham's return to Highbury.

Liverpool, meanwhile, have not been playing especially well, but they have ground out results. Like Arsenal, they are unbeaten at home and their one defeat was at Manchester United, in a game they did more than enough to win. Robbie Fowler is getting over his ankle injury, and the goals are coming with his return to fitness. His brace against a stubborn Derby County took Liverpool into third place, with a game in hand, a point behind the leaders.

Wimbledon are hanging in there too, still fourth following a hard-fought draw at Middlesbrough. Chelsea's 3-1 victory against Tottenham at an emotional Stamford Bridge took them into sixth place, and would no-doubt have pleased the late Matthew Harding. Speculation continues over what will happen to Harding's personal fortune, but Chelsea fans have been assured that funds will be made available to keep the club in the hunt for honours.

At the bottom, Blackburn's League Cup defeat by Second Division Stockport County proved the final straw for Rovers manager Ray Harford. He resigned, leaving the 1994-95 champions at the foot of the table, without a win in 11 League games. Critics argue that low-profile Harford was not a big enough name to attract top-quality players to Ewood Park, and that a high-flying replacement is Blackburn's best hope of getting out of their present mess.

Rovers might follow Arsenal's lead in hiring a foreign coach, though Terry Venables and Sheffield United boss Howard Kendall have been linked with the job. Things also look grim for Nottingham Forest and Coventry, with only one League victory in 11 attempts each.

In the First Division, Steve Coppell is back in management, at Manchester City. He has made a good start, with City climbing towards the relative safety of mid-table. Coppell was honest enough to admit that his main priority is to keep the club in the division, with any thought of promotion some way off.

Bolton, relegated from the Premiership last season, lead the way, with rejuvenated Norwich just behind them. The Canaries are under Mike Walker's guidance once more; his side are playing some of the best football in the division, and Norwich should be there or thereabouts come next May.

JOHN KELLY

Scotland

Tallinn tale

THERE'S ONLY one team in Tallinn, they chanted. At least the Scottish supporters, many of whom had laid out vast sums to get to Estonia, managed to retain a sense of humour.

They were watching Scotland apparently achieve victory in a World Cup tie by way of a walkover, after the failure of the Estonian players to turn up at the rescheduled kick-off time.

Showing typical inertia, FIFA failed to immediately award the game to Scotland, deciding instead to delay judgment until the next meeting of the International Committee on November 7, incidentally a mere three days before Scotland's next World Cup tie, against Sweden at Ibrox.

Much has been said about the Estonia debacle and one can't help but offer some form of sympathy to the Estonians – however, the fact remains that the Scots acted in strict accordance with the rules laid down by FIFA. Any decision other than the game being awarded to Scotland by default would be regarded as a total travesty.

While Scotland, yet to concede a goal in their three World Cup qualifiers, appear to be getting it right at international level, the same cannot be said for Scottish club sides at European level. Following early exits from the European competitions for Celtic and Hearts, Aberdeen followed suit after defeat by Danish side Brondby while Rangers lost all their first four Champions League matches. Their 4-1 mauling by Ajax at the Amsterdam Arena was further marred by the sending off of Paul Gascoigne for a vicious lunge at Winston Bogarde, although that incident was overshadowed by allegations of wife-beating against Gascoigne.

Lights on, nobody home . . . Craig Brown surveys the scene

Pictures of his wife, Sheryl, emerging from hospital with broken fingers and facial injuries, allied to the unsavoury events of Amsterdam, looked to have left Gazza's Rangers future in jeopardy.

Typically, Gascoigne reacted by scoring a spectacular goal against Aberdeen a few days after having described himself as a "disgrace" during a hastily-arranged press conference.

It is looking more likely than ever that the destination of the Premier Division title will depend largely on the outcome of the four league fixtures between Rangers, already one up in the Rangers, already one up in the series, and Celtic. A truce in the cash row with Dutch striker Pierre Van Hooijdonk may help Celtic. Verbal broadsides were fired but peace broke out and Van Hooijdonk celebrated by heading home a last-minute winner against Motherwell.

On a sadder note, racism reappeared when Hibernian's Kevin Harper, the only black player to have represented Scotland at any level, accused Hearts midfielder Gary Mackay of racial abuse during the latest Edinburgh derby.

Northern Ireland

Crusaders turn the tables

CRUSADERS, beaten on penalties in the controversial Ulster Cup Final, were successful in the League Cup Final when they defeated Glentoran by the only goal of the match at Windsor Park.

The heroes for Crusaders were the goalscorer, 31-year-old Dubliner Paddy Dully, who was playing only his second game for the club – he is on loan from League of Ireland club Bohemians – and Scottish goalkeeper Kevin McKeown, who saved a penalty from Glentoran captain John Devine.

Roy Walker's team certainly seem to have the Indian sign over rivals Linfield, whom they defeated with a last-minute goal in their first League encounter of the season – their fifth successive Championship win over the Blues. At the other end of the table, the favourites for relegation are Ards, managed by former Linfield supremo Roy Coyle.

With only one point from the first two World Cup qualifying games in Belfast against Ukraine and Armenia, Northern Ireland's hopes of reaching France seem already to have evaporated.

The technique and ball skills of the local players seem to be falling further behind those of their continental rivals. Manager Bryan Hamilton even questioned the commitment of some of his players, who have the added disadvantage of not playing regularly for their clubs in England and Scotland, and also not playing at the highest level in the English League system.

ROY KITSON

Wales

Newtown looking likely

THE top five clubs are beginning to pull away although early leaders Conwy United have faltered slightly due to a spate of injuries to key players.

Current leaders Newtown continue to play entertaining football combined with a miserly defence, conceding only seven goals in 11 games.

A 3-1 away win at Fflint maintained their impetus but reigning champions Barry Town are in second spot and looking good. Their professional status, and attitude, puts them a step above their opponents thus far.

They were a goal down after nine minutes at Aberystwyth but came back after the break and hit four. Caernarfon, in third spot, are unbeaten and have a fine blend of youth and experience. Leading scorer Eifion Williams is attracting attention from English clubs.

The national team were well beaten 3-1 by Holland but manager Bobby Gould refuses to throw in the towel on the World Cup campaign. Wales still lead the group but need an unlikely win from their next game in Holland.

MEL AP IOR THOMAS

Pro-file Ole Gunnar Solskjaer

Club Manchester Utd
Country Norway
Born February 26, 1973, in Kristiansund
Previous clubs Clausenegen FK (Nor), Molde FK (Nor)
International debut November 1995, v Jamaica
International caps 7 (4 goals)

OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER was nicknamed 'Askeladden' by his Norwegian club manager Aage Hareide, after the charmed character of a Norse fairy tale whose fortunes enjoy a rags-to-riches upturn.

Solskjaer, the 23-year-old from the fishing port of Kristiansund has taken less than three months to illustrate just how appropriate that name is. Among the Manchester United faithful, few would have heard of Solskjaer when he completed his £1.2million move from Molde in the close season.

Even his new manager, Alex Ferguson, made the signing with the intention of placing him in the reserves for at least half a season to learn his trade. But illness to Andy Cole late in United's pre-season forced Solskjaer into United's plans sooner than expected – with spectacular results.

Solskjaer, a fresh-faced young man who quickly earned the nickname 'Baby face', adapted to Premiership football with startling ease, scoring five goals in his first four appearances.

"The boy has been superb, a revelation," says Ferguson. "He has surprised us all. I was looking at him for about six months' time but he has produced the goods. He has improved with every training session, every game he has been better and the way he has been playing it has been impossible to keep him out."

The only place where Solskjaer has made a bigger impact than Old Trafford is back home in Norway. A regular collection of Norwegian journalists follow the progress of the most expensive footballer their country has ever produced. The day after he scored both goals in a 2-0 win over Spurs, four pages of one national newspaper were dedicated to "the new wonder kid at Old Trafford".

Mother Brita and father Oivind, a former wrestler, have made the trip over the North Sea to watch their son in action, and Solskjaer's girlfriend Silje has completed the happy families scenario by moving to live with Ole in Andrei Kanchelskis's old south Manchester house.

It is the stuff that footballing fairy tales – and clichés – are made of. But Solskjaer, a naturally shy and unassuming character, has been taken aback and vaguely embarrassed by the amount of interest his exploits have generated. "I don't deserve all the praise," he says. "It's far too much publicity and I don't really like it. I'm a striker, I'm supposed to nick goals and, in any case, the team plays exactly the way I need for me to score.

"It's been incredible, I can't believe it. I was not expecting to even be in the side at this stage of my career. I was hoping to play around Christmas, but things have happened so fast.

"I think I still have a long way to go and Alex Ferguson is always telling me I have to work on being stronger and more consistent, and that is what I am trying to do.

"I think there is too much focus on me just because I am a striker. It is very different in Norway. There everyone talks about the team. Over here it is more focused on the goalscorers and that is why I like to talk about the team – because without such a wonderful team I would not be scoring."

Solskjaer had been a professional with Molde for only two seasons when United beat Italy's Cagliari and Germany's Hamburg in the race for his signature. It was a move that Hareide, who has taken a close interest in the player's development, fully endorsed.

"Solskjaer was improving and he had the chance to move even sooner," says Hareide, whose playing career included a spell with Manchester rivals City in the 1980s. "But I told him to wait for a big club with good players. I thought his talent would be wasted alongside bad players and that's why United are perfect for him.

"He is just made to play with Eric Cantona, David Beckham and Roy Keane and I told Alex he'd be surprised by the boy's quality. His scoring record is so impressive and I know Alex is realising he has signed a very special talent.

"In his first season for Molde he hit 20 goals in 26 games and before he left in the summer he got 11 in 12 games. He has quick feet and will always shoot on sight, but he still has things to learn."

Learning is something that seems to come to Solskjaer very quickly. The immediate impact he has made in English domestic football extends to the European and world stages. His seven international appearances for Norway have brought him four goals and he made an instant impression in United's Champions League campaign, joining David Beckham on the scoresheet in the 2-0 win over Rapid Vienna.

Perhaps it is appropriate, therefore, that Solskjaer's main source of inspiration in his time at Old Trafford has been United's most famous foreign star – Eric Cantona.

"I can't speak highly enough of Eric and what he has done for me since I have been here," he says. "He is my guide in the team, he tells me what to do, where to run when I'm out there on the pitch. He makes it so much easier for me. I've never experienced any footballer like him. I'm not just talking about his skill on the pitch but also the type of person he is. It would be unfair on my own father to call Eric a father figure but he is certainly the person I look up to at Old Trafford.

"It has been very easy for me to settle in at Old Trafford. For a start I speak English, but also the reception I got from Alex Ferguson, Eric and the rest of the players at the club has been fantastic."

IAN WHITTLE

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EUROPE

Austria

Herzog hits back

Miscreant playmaker makes amends

In favour . . . Herzog scored winner against Sweden

AFTER a disappointing 0-0 home draw with Scotland in the opening World Cup qualifying tie, Austria scored a surprise 1-0 away victory over group favourites Sweden.

Ironically playmaker Andi Herzog, not so long ago vilified for putting club interests before those of the national team, hit the winner.

Champions Rapid Vienna were the only unbeaten team after 11 rounds, but Austria Salzburg were top. Under the guidance of their one-time stopper, Heribert Weber, they are becoming a force in Austrian football again.

Rapid will have a fight on their hands if they are going to hang on to the title, especially as they are additionally burdened by the Champions League, where they are finding life tough with Juventus, Manchester United and Fenerbahce.

Grazer AK's manager Ljubomir Petrovic, who took over from the departed German Hans-Ulrich Thomale, did not last long.

Petrovic, a Serb who led Red Star Belgrade to the European Cup in 1991, lost his temper with compatriot Boban Dmitrovic, who was sent off against Belgium's Ekeren in the UEFA Cup, and punched him twice in the face. On the way home, Petrovic was sacked by the club directors.

Next day his assistant, Hans-Peter Schaller, was promoted but then a week later, following a 2-1 defeat by Ried, he too was dismissed.

His successor is August Starek, who managed GAK for three years in the 1980s.

Problems also are mounting for local rivals Sturm. Italian import and former international midfielder Giuseppe Giannini scored his first goal after 11 matches, against FK Austria, but was later sent off for a foul.

ARTHUR ROTMIL

Switzerland

Leeds affair no laughing matter

LEEDS UNITED are not exactly flavour of the month in Switzerland.

First they sold reserve striker Phil Masinga to St Gallen, who paid a hard-earned £500,000 for a man who left his shooting boots at home. After 14 League matches he was still waiting for his first goal, yet St Gallen managed to off load him to Italian Serie B team Salernitana.

Then Leeds infuriated the Zurich management over the loan transfer of Swedish international Tomas Brolin. Leeds' new manager George Graham decided he wanted him back but Brolin had no interest in returning.

Leeds threatened to take him to court for breach of contract and called on FIFA for a worldwide ban. "I'd rather give up football than play for Leeds," Brolin said, although the player now says he is keen to make up with the Premiership club.

Another unhappy soul is Darko Pancev, who won the European Cup with Red Star Belgrade and the European Golden Boot with 34 goals in 1991. He lost his place at FC Sion and claimed he was being victimised by Italian manager Alberto Bigon because he is a foreigner.

In the League, the surprise is the erratic form of title-holders Grasshopper, headline-makers in the Champions League but trailing in the title race.

ARTHUR ROTMIL

Belgium

Two coaches pay the price

BAD STARTS cost both Wilfried Sleurs and Willy Reynders their jobs as coaches of St Truiden and KV Mechelen respectively.

After only eight months in charge, Sleurs was replaced with almost indecent haste by Freddy Smets, the former RWDM coach who had been at La Louviere in the Second Division. Zivica Kanacki stepped up from assistant to succeed Reynders, who had lasted barely a year at KVM.

Jerko Tipuric has kept his job for the time being at least. Cercle Bruges kept faith in him, although the club – Cup-finalists last season – were in danger of being left stranded at the foot of the table.

Tipuric was hardly helped by injuries that deprived him of key defenders Wim Kooiman and Thierry Siquet. The

Dutchman, Kooiman, was the victim of a nasty challenge by Anderlecht's Ghanaian, Samuel Johnson, which went unnoticed by the referee.

Tipuric must have felt that Cercle's luck had changed with an equaliser on the stroke of half-time by Davy Cooreman in the home game against Harelbeke, only for Cooreman to collapse in the dressing room having aggravated an old knee injury.

Without this influential midfielder, who will be missing until the New Year, Cercle then lost 2-1.

The run of defeats became six following a 4-2 reverse at Lierse, and only in the subsequent 1-1 home draw with fellow strugglers St Truiden was the rot stopped. Yet November arrived with Cercle still looking for their first League win.

Their only success had been in the first leg of the Cup-winners Cup, 3-2 over Brann of Bergen. The Norwegians went on to win the second leg 4-0.

Cercle's fortunes have been in stark contrast to those of the city's other team, Club Brugge, who are pursuing Standard Liege at the top.

They closed the gap when Standard suffered a shock 2-1 defeat at newly-promoted Mouscron.

NICHOLAS HARLING

Luxembourg

Paul's pride

COACH Paul Philipp's team of five professionals and six amateurs did their coach and the entire country proud with a brave display against Bulgaria in their first World Cup qualifier.

Goals by Balakov and Kostadinov to one by Langers gave Bulgaria a 2-1 win, but they were indebted to Mihailov for some stunning saves – especially one from Hellers in the last minute.

"My players were magnificent, and I have only admiration for the way they played," said Philipp. "I feel that the tag of 'whipping boys' has been laid to rest."

In the sixth round of League games, FC Wiltz lost their 100 per cent record in spectacular fashion, losing 5-0 at home to rejuvenated Beggen.

Rodange have parted company with Francis Angonese, who had been trainer for only eight weeks. He has been replaced by Norbert Kaiser.

● Liechtenstein again went close to a first international victory, but lost 2-1 to Lithuania in a World Cup qualifier in Vilnius.

TIM BRICE

Republic of Ireland

Mick makes waves

MICK McCARTHY'S bad run of results in his first eight games, where he experimented with many young players, has been quickly forgotten following two consecutive World Cup qualifying wins.

Mine's a double . . . Cascarino in full flow

Beating Liechtenstein 5-0 and Macedonia 3-0 has put the Republic at the top of Group Eight. Another win over Iceland in Dublin on November 10 would let McCarthy enjoy a worry-free Christmas break.

Jason McAteer got his first international goal against Macedonia and Tony Cascarino, only in the team because Niall Quinn was injured, brought his Republic goal tally to 14 with two strikes.

McAteer dedicated the win to his absent friend Gary Kelly, who is unable to make the Irish squad. Phil Babb, the third member of the 'three amigos' is in the squad, but has played only once under McCarthy, who could recall fit again Paul McGrath for the Iceland game.

If McCarthy is doing well, so is his assistant Ian Evans. After a few disastrous years under Maurice Setters, Evans is discovering some real talent and the Irish Under-21 team's 4-0 win over Macedonia was their best victory in a competitive game.

Alan McLoughlin, whose career has been rejuvenated under McCarthy, is the favourite for the FAI's Player of the Year award. The other two senior nominations are Denis Irwin and Shay Given. After playing in McCarthy's first nine games, Given lost his place to Alan Kelly against Macedonia because he was not playing first-team football at club level.

At this stage of the season, it's anybody's guess as to who will win the League. Bohemians were the early pacesetters, while champions St Patrick's got off to a very bad start and favourites Shelbourne have been a big disappointment. University College Dublin, who were promoted last season, surprised a few people by moving into second place by the end of October. The only certainty seems to be that the other two promoted clubs, Bray Wanderers and Home Farm/Everton, are good bets for relegation.

SEAN CREEDON

Pro-file Henrik Larsson

Club Feyenoord
Country Sweden
Born September 10, 1971, in Helsingborg
Previous Clubs Hogaborg BK, Helsingborgs BK
International debut October 1993, v Finland
Honours Dutch Cup 1994, 1995. World Cup third place 1994

THEY do love their Swedes at Feyenoord. Some 25 years ago, the Rotterdammers worshipped star striker Ove Kindvall, the man who scored the winner in their 1970 Champions Cup final triumph over Celtic. Now it's the turn of the dreadlocked figure of Henrik Larsson to get the fans on their feet at the Feyenoord Stadion.

It was at Swedish club Helsingborgs, who recently knocked Aston Villa out of the UEFA Cup, that Larsson first came to prominence, firing in a hatful of goals and encouraging Feyenoord to snap him up in 1993.

But his move to Holland wasn't an instant success. Like so many of his teammates during three years of Feyenoord under-achievement, Larsson struggled for consistency.

This season, though, the Swede appears to have conquered his problem and, buzzing around to great effect in the attacking third, the 25-year-old has been instrumental in Feyenoord's emergence as title contenders.

The Rotterdammers' coach Arie Haan was widely criticised in the summer when he showed the door to the international quartet of Rob Witschge, Peter Bosz, Regi Blinker and Orlando Trustfull. But there are no complaints now as Feyenoord confound the critics by setting the early championship pace.

Impressive individual performances have been legion at Feyenoord this season. Never mind his lack of pace, Ronald Koeman is still passing like a dream, young Giovanni Van Bronckhorst and Jean Paul Van Gastel are in fine fettle in midfield, while the attacking trident of Henk Vos, Gaston Taument and Larsson provides the firepower.

Larsson, perpetual motion itself, is a multi-purpose forward, equally capable of dropping deep or converting goal chances when they come his way.

"In my opinion, Henrik has been one of the most in-form players in Holland this season," says Feyenoord keeper Ed De Goey. "He has looked so sharp in the box and I can't see any reason why he should not finish up among the top three or four goalscorers in the country.

"He has many strengths to his game. Excellent close control, loads of energy and will-to-win. If it's snapping at the heels of a defender in possession, creating chances for others or popping up in the box to score himself, he is irrepressible."

A member of the Swedish side which surpassed all expectations by obtaining third-place at USA 94, Larsson concedes it was a huge disappointment when his country came up short in their bid to qualify for Euro 96. But now he has his sights set on making sure Sweden do not miss out on France 98.

"It was a big blow not to reach the European Championship finals," says Larsson. "We slipped up badly allowing Switzerland and Turkey to qualify ahead of us. Now it's up to us to bounce back.

"Our World Cup group is a hard one, Austria and Scotland are good sides. But it would be unthinkable if we didn't make it to France. We must be there."

NICK BIDWELL

Croatia

Sales may be stopped

AN EMBARGO on transfers abroad may be introduced by the Croatian FA following the sale of two teenagers to Italian clubs.

Ivan Javorcic, 17, has left FC Split for Brescia, and Mladen Kovacic, a year older, has gone from FC Omis to Cesena.

Both cost £60,000, mere pocket money for Italian clubs but worrying for Croatian authorities, who are anxious to keep players at home to help with the rebuilding of the country following the civil strife of recent years.

The FA is considering the possibility of banning transfers abroad for players under 23, and clubs are offering longer contracts. Eight-year deals are being provided by Hajduk Split, one of Europe's greatest 'soccer factories' who now have nearly 20 former players in other countries.

Andrijasevic, Pralija, Jarni, Mornar, Jelicic and Hibic are in Spain, Boksic and Rapaic in Italy, Stimac, Asanovic, Bilic and Jerkan in England, Erceg in Germany, Kozniku in France and Mise in Holland.

The big name in the country at the moment is Igor Cvitanovic of FC Croatia, named Player of the Year. Nenad Pralija, now with Espanyol, was second, and Marko Mlinaric, who has just retired from playing, was third.

The national team began the qualification campaign for the World Cup with a 4-1 win over Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In the domestic League, FC Mladost caused a surprise by winning 3-2 away at FC Croatia, the home side's only defeat in the first nine games. Mladost are a small club from the village of Suhopolje, and were founded by a soldier, General Duro Decak, who is now club president.

ZDRAVKO REIC

Albania

Neptun out of his depth

DEFEAT against Portugal in a World Cup qualifying match was followed by the resignation of national coach, Neptun Bajko.

He issued a press release after the 3-0 defeat, which said that his players had not stuck to the guidelines he had laid down. "That was the collapse of the team, and at such a point a coach should resign," he said.

Bajko had been in the job since August 1994, and had achieved a certain amount of success, but often was criticised for keeping to the 'old guard' of players now with clubs abroad.

The entire team against Portugal were based outside their own country.

On the domestic scene, Lushnja's hopes have not been realised. They lost four of their first six games, and manager Hasan Lika lost his job.

Flamurtari led the table having dropped only one point, and champions Tirana were second, two points behind.

GEZIM NUSHI

Portugal

Coach causes uproar

CHARGES and counter-charges are flying around Portuguese football these days, as money's part in the system becomes more and more important.

Porto power . . . Artur celebrates his goal against Milan

FC Porto coach Antonio de Oliveira, for example, attended a talk with eight media reporters and accused them of concerted efforts to denigrate his club, chairman Pinto da Costa, and his good self.

The daily sports paper, *Record,* then reported that de Oliveira became so angry during the meeting that he claimed the journalists "deserved to be murdered".

When later pressed to explain his remarks, de Oliveira denied making them, and claimed that he had not attended any such meeting.

As accusation and counter-accusation flew back and forth, the atmosphere grew ever more hot – especially when Pimenta Machado, chairman of Guimaraes, claimed that Porto's place at the top of the table was due to "protection" by referees.

Machado is not the only one to think this way, but there was no sign of any favouritism when Porto beat Benfica 5-0 to win the so-called Super Cup – this was Benfica's worst-ever defeat at the Stadium of Light – or when Porto returned to the capital a little later and beat Sporting Lisbon 1-0.

Porto also defeated Milan and Rosenborg in the Champions League, without any 'foul' claims.

Meanwhile, Benfica attracted only 4,000 – a mere 116,000 below capacity – for their home game against Lokomotiv in the Cup-winners Cup. Many fans stayed away because they believe that football clubs should not be run as businesses are run.

Everything about Benfica is now being offered for sale by mail order, and chairman Damasio has promised that if land around the stadium can be sold, then the club will buy some international stars.

Damasio and his associates are all men of faultless character. Why then are there so many rumours about commission on land sales, transfers, contracts, and so on?

ALBERTO DA SILVA

Greece

Rocha bites the bullet

HOW QUICKLY they forget. It wasn't long ago that Argentinian coach Juan Ramon Rocha was King of Athens.

Bound for Spain . . . Juan Jose Borelli

He had guided Panathinaikos to the double in 1994-95, reached the semi-final of the Champions League and taken the League title for the second successive year last season.

But the dream of repeating European excellence faded quickly when the Athens club was knocked out of the first round of both the Champions League and the UEFA Cup. And Rocha paid the price.

Despite the crowd support enjoyed by Rocha, club owner George Vardinoyannis decided to ditch his coach, who he had hired as a temporary replacement for sacked Bosnian coach Ivitsa Osim in 1994. The move came after a league away loss to Panahaiki Patras.

"We are turning a page in history. With your help we will once again reach the road of success," Vardinoyannis told the players in announcing the firing of Rocha.

Rocha was not the only Argentinian to leave Panathinaikos. Midfielder Juan Jose Borelli will be packing his bags as well. FIFA informed Panathinaikos that the Athens club must give up Borelli to Spanish club Oviedo on November 1.

Meanwhile Olympiakos continued their unbeaten track in the Greek First Division with a 3-0 away win at Apollon Athens, giving the winners 13 points and joint first place with surprise package Paniliakos Pyrgos.

LOU ECONOMOPOULOS

Israel

So close to history

THE 1-1 home draw with Russia was a disappointing result for Israel, who had hopes of gaining an important advantage over their World Cup qualifying group rivals.

Following Israel's 2-1 home win over Bulgaria, expectations were very high and the hosts, who played the more positive game, were 11 minutes away from recording an historic win.

The rise in expectations is an indication at the changing times and the improvement of the national team. Coach Shlomo Scharf blamed his defence for allowing the goal that cancelled out Gadi Brumer's excellent earlier effort.

Scharf's talk will not become any easier now that Ronnen Harazi and Felix Halfon have foot injuries.

Hapoel Petah Tikv lead the National League after six rounds, with a 100 per cent record. The disappointing showing by the more fancied clubs, particularly champions Maccabi Tel Aviv and Maccabi Haifa, reflects a drop in the general level of play. Both the big Maccabi clubs appear to lack the sparkle of past seasons.

Tel Aviv are missing Itzik Zohar, who has moved to second-placed Betar Jerusalem, while Haifa are now looking to replace the two brightest stars of Israeli soccer at present, Haim Revivo *(see profile, opposite)*, and Eyal Berkovic, who has joined Southampton.

Two coaches have lost their jobs. Viko Hadad was shown the door by Ironi Rishon Lezion and Avraham Marchinsky was dismissed by Maccabi Petah Tikva, for the second time.

ORI LEWIS

Malta

More like tennis

CONSECUTIVE 6-0 defeats, against the Czech Republic and against Slovakia four days later, sent Maltese football again reeling to a record low.

Coach Kosanovic's boy's have now conceded 18 goals without reply in their three opening World Cup qualifiers. The scores are more like tennis than soccer.

"It has never occurred to me to resign following these two defeats – I never regretted taking up this post and I am determined to finish my job," he said.

But the humiliating scorelines, in particular against Slovakia, again revealed numerous question marks

about the validity of Maltese football in the international arena.

On the local scene, leaders Floriana dropped their first points of the season in a 2-2 draw against Hamrun but still lead the table.

Goals by Doncic and Agius meant a 2-0 Valletta victory over Birkirkara, and the Citizens marched on to third place by getting the better of both Hamrun and Hibernians by 3-0.

DOMENICO AQUILINA

Slovenia

Outsiders to the fore

TWO outsiders set the pace in the first third of the Slovenian season, and although there is a long way to go, both are hopeful of staying in the hunt.

Primorje, from Ajdovscina, lead with eights wins, three draws and only one defeat – an excellent run by a team with no full internationals and only two Under-21 representatives, Zoran Vulic and Antun Zlogar. Rudar from Velenje are second, five points behind.

One of the biggest clubs, Olimpija Ljubliana, did not get off the bottom until their 12th game, and they are facing hard times now that their main sponsors have withdrawn support.

The national team lost 2-0 to both Greece and Denmark in World Cup qualifiers. Srecko Katanec, one of the best Slovenian players ever, has taken over as coach of the Under-21 squad.

ZDRAVKO REIC

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Gaining in strength

THE Bosnian League is gaining in strength, with several clubs from the former Yugoslavia involved.

They include Sarajevo, Zeljeznicar, Sloboda, Velez and Celik, but after eight rounds outsiders Bosna Visoko led with 17 points.

A national under-21 squad has been selected to contest the next European Championship qualifiers, and all the players are Muslims, although national manager Fuad Muzurovic claims that the only criterion for selection is a player's desire to take part.

ZDRAVKO REIC

Macedonia

Kids must come of age

NATIONAL coach Gjoko Hadzievski is banking on youth to help improve the outlook.

The average age of the team who played Eire in Dublin was only 22, and Hadzievski believes that he has the nucleus of a squad capable of competing for Euro 2000 and World Cup 2002.

Sileks are dominating the domestic scene, having taken a nine-point lead after only 10 matches with nine wins.

MICHEL STOJMANOVSKI

Turkey

Kostadinov lands himself in bother

THAT comprehensive Manchester United victory over Fenerbahce in the Champions League had a sequel – a rebuke for Bulgarian striker Emil Kostadinov.

He "went public" with criticism of the Fenerbahce coach, Brazilian Sebastiao Lazaroni, blaming him for picking the wrong line-up and adding: "Some players do not want to co-ordinate with me. I didn't get a proper pass.

"Galatasaray played a superb game against Paris St Germain, and showed how collective football should be played. Here, who is going to score – me or the defenders?"

The outcome was a rap over the knuckles for outspoken Emil, who was warned that anything similar in future would lead to his departure.

Kostadinov was right about Galatasaray, who put on an excellent show in the Cup-winners Cup and deserved a bigger margin than 4-2. Hayrettin conceded two silly goals in two minutes to undo some of the good work done by the rest of the team, notably Hagi, who created three of the goals.

Gala's two signings from Steaua Bucharest, Adrian Ilie and Sebastian Filipescu, were ineligible for this stage of the Cup-winners Cup. Ilie has signed a contract for three-and-half years, worth £2million, and his colleague has signed for half that amount, over four years.

About half of the money comes from Ulrich van Gobbel's sale to Southampton, who are managed by former Gala coach Graeme Souness.

Gala followed three successive 2-0 League victories by beating Gaziantep 6-1, Hakan scoring four. This put them top on 25 points, two clear of Besiktas, who also have won four in a row. Trabzon (23 points) and Fenerbahce (22) complete the usual Big Four domination at the top.

The national team lost 4-0 to France in Paris, where defensive errors were a worry for coach Mustafa Denizli.

Celil Sagir of Samsunspor won his first cap, as did Sardar Topraktepe of Besiktas, who substituted for him in the last half-hour.

HASAN CEMALI

Pro-file Haim Revivo

Club Celta Vigo (Spa)
Born February 22, 1972, in Tel Aviv
Previous Clubs Bnei Yehuda, Maccabi Haifa
International debut August 1992, v Faroe Islands
International caps 24 (4 goals)
Honours Israeli Cup 1994

FEW WOULD have bet a penny on Israel's chances of qualifying for France 98 from a group containing the might of Russia and Bulgaria. But if highly-talented midfielder Haim Revivo and his cohorts can sustain their magnificent autumnal form, the Israelis could yet find themselves at their first World Cup finals since Mexico in 1970.

In Israel's opening two World Cup 98 qualifiers, the shock 2-1 win over Bulgaria and a hard-fought 1-1 draw against Russia, Revivo was at the heart of the bulk of his country's best attacking moves, constantly bamboozling opponents with his nifty footwork and directness. Now we know just why Israeli fans have dubbed him 'The Magician'.

"I'm tremendously proud of the way the young players in my team are grabbing their opportunity to shine in international football," says Israeli boss Shlomo Sharf. "Guys like Revivo, Berkovic, Harazi and Nimni are proving they have the skill and temperament to perform at the very highest level.

"I'm not in the habit of singling out individuals. Football is a team game. But I will make an exception for Revivo. He is playing with so much craft and self-belief at the moment. I'm delighted with the progress he has made of late.

"Revivo is a superb all-rounder. Not only is he a fine goalscorer. He can make chances, too. He loves taking on defenders and his final ball is usually good. He has great potential."

Bearing in mind Revivo's obvious technical prowess, it is hardly surprising the 24-year-old attacking midfielder cites Brazilian football as his chief source of inspiration and he has fond memories of events leading up to an Israel-Brazil friendly in Ramat-Gan 18 months ago.

"The day before the big match, the Brazilian coach Zagallo invited me to join one of their training sessions," recalls Revivo. "It was a fantastic experience. I could not get over it. Kicking a ball around with superstars like Ronaldo, Dunga, Roberto Carlos and Juninho. We ended up losing the game 2-1, but they were an unforgettable few days all the same."

Israel's Footballer of the Year in 1995, Revivo is currently earning his corn on loan to Spanish side Celta Vigo from Maccabi Haifa, and he hopes a spell in the European big-time will considerably sharpen up his act.

"I had some great times playing in Israeli club football with Bnei Yehuda and Maccabi Haifa," says Revivo. "But it was important for me to take on the challenge of making the grade in a major European football country. I could not turn down this opportunity.

"Spain has a very competitive league and it is a wonderful place to play football. The passion for the game here is overwhelming. Playing for Celta in a very tough championship will, I'm sure, do me good. Every week I shall be coming up against some of the best players in the world and I'm confident this will help me develop my game."

NICK BIDWELL

EUROPE

Denmark

Herfloge are no village idiots

VILLAGE club Herfolge have been the toast of Denmark on and off the field.

The unsung team from provincial Zealand have climbed into fourth place in the Superliga with a series of superb results, including a 4-2 demolition of Aab Aalborg in the 12th round.

Herfloge is a tiny village of just a few thousand people, and the club was only started on a real scale in the 1970s by local soft drinks businessman Gudmun Joergensen.

They have no stars, no internationals, yet they consistently embarrass their big-city opponents.

Their season would have been even better but for one controversial match early in the season. They beat highly-fancied AGF Aarhus 3-1, but the result was overturned to a 3-0 win for AGF.

The reason? Herfolge had played Fareoese goalkeeper Jakup Mikkelsen in the match without obtaining the necessary clearance after he returned from his home islands having played a single league game there.

Top scorer is 20-year-old striker Chris Hermansen, who joined them after one year on the books of Bundesliga side Koln. Yet goalscoring is their big problem, with only 13 goals in 13 games. They have conceded 14, actually 11, because three of those never entered their net!

Herfolge's season contrasts sharply with that of FC Copenhagen, languishing in the relegation zone after a run of seven matches without a win.

The club, formed by a merger of KB and B1903 a few years ago, is now involved in negotiations to take over another capital city side, Lyngby. That may happen at the end of the current season. Brondby, despite some hiccups, remain top of the table, and continued their fine European form with a 2-0 aggregate win over Aberdeen in the UEFA Cup second round.

Goalkeeper Mogens Krogh was in blistering form, but is hoping for a move to English football this winter.

JIM HOLDEN

Iceland

Eight years – 11 trophies

COACH Gudjohn Thordarson has won 11 trophies in only eight years, having led IA Akranes to a record fifth League championship in a row.

IA's second League-and-Cup double in four years was achieved on the last day, with a win over KR Reykjavik. The Reykjavik side needed only one point to take the title for the first time in 28 years, but lost 4-1 in Akranes – population 5,300, where the match drew a crowd of almost 6,000.

Thordarson had an extra reason for satisfaction, because his son Bjarni scored the last two goals.

IA then went for a treble, but lost 5-3 to IBV, the Cup runners-up, in the final of the Super Cup.

The national team now appear to have no hope of reaching the World Cup finals in 1998, after taking one point and scoring just one goal in their first three matches.

They lost 2-0 to Lithuania in Vilnius, and then crashed 4-0 at home to Romania four days later. A controversial penalty decision cost them dear in the first match but there were no excuses for the dire performance against Romania.

The one consolation was the form of the Under-16 squad, whose recent excellent performances booked them a place in the European Championship, to be held in Germany next year.

RAB CHRISTIE

Sweden

Roasts and toasts for IFK

IFK GOTHENBURG completed the formality of winning the Swedish title for the 17th time with a 6-0 win at Trelleborgs.

Winner . . . IFK's Alexandersson

This was IFK's fourth title in succession and their 10th during the past 15 years – and they celebrated in traditional style with a meal of roast potatoes.

IFK also became the toast of the country with a 2-1 win over Milan, the supposed top dogs of the Champions League.

Wingers Jesper Blomqvist and Niclas Alexandersson boosted their reputations, 'Alex' hitting the winner and creating the equaliser for substitute Erik Wahlstedt.

Veteran Stefan Pettersson, 33, has added some extra sparkle to IFK's game in recent weeks. Pettersson had to miss matches earlier because of heart trouble, but has come back strongly.

"Stefan is brilliant with his vision, passing and little flick-ons – he should play for our national team again," says team-mate Blomqvist.

Pettersson has signed a new contract with IFK, but goalkeeper Thomas Ravelli will not reveal his plans until alter this year. Even at 37, he still dreams of playing abroad, probably in the USA.

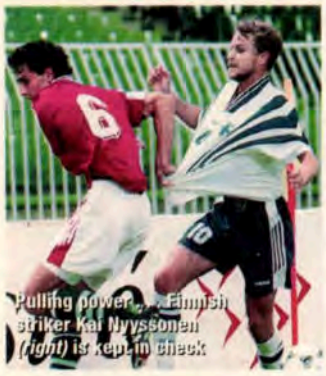
Sweden's World Cup hopes took a blow when they lost at home to Austria, and they now must win in Scotland, where coach Tommy Svensson will have to do without defender Gary Sundgren of AIK. He was injured in a League match while colliding with his own goalkeeper.

PENTTI HIETANEN

Finland

Niemi can't manage alone

TWO World Cup qualifying matches lost by the odd goal. That's the harsh reality of life for Finnish national coach Richard Moller Nielsen.


Pulling power . . . Finnish striker Kai Nyyssonen (right) is kept in check

The 1-0 defeat in Hungary was followed by a 3-2 home defeat to Switzerland. Although the Swiss were clearly the better team, Moller Nielsen could take heart from the fact that the Finns fought back even when two down.

"We had to go into the match without our best players, Litmanen and Jarvinen, and skipper Lindberg was injured during the first half," said Moller Nielsen. "But we must make changes for the future. Our defence made too many mistakes against a team of Switzerland's quality."

The local media were somewhat critical of Finland's 3-5-2 formation, which left too many loopholes at the back for the Swiss players to exploit. As against the Hungarians, goalkeeper Antti Niemi of FC Copenhagen kept Finland in the game with some splendid saves.

In the League, the topsy-turvy season goes on. FC Jazz are favourites for the championship title, with both FinnPa and FC MyPa still in with a chance.

PENTTI HIETANEN

Norway

Isaksen to the rescue

NOT UNTIL the final whistle sounded at all the venues in the championship's final-round matches did the ramifications become clear.

Moss needed a home win against Kongsvinger to secure another year in the top division, no matter how Valerengen and Stromsgodset fared.

But football sometimes ignores the script. Moss were 2-0 up in the second half and their two rivals were not doing well. Then things changed: Moss conceded two goals, Valerengen were losing 3-2 and Stromsgodset suddenly started to score.

As the matches reached full-time Moss were still up on goal difference, but deep into injury time Krister Isaksen scored the decisive goal for Stromsgodset in their 6-2 victory against Start.

That saved his team from relegation because they had scored more goals.

Brann of Bergen had to beat Tromso in their final game at home to secure third place. They believed they had done it when Jan Ove Pedersen scored to give them a 3-2 lead in injury time. But a minute later, Tromso equalised and Viking snatched the bronze medals. Brann finished fourth and had to settle for a place in the UEFA Cup.

Earlier in the week Brann had experienced exactly the same fate when PSV Eindhoven snatched a goal in the final minute of the Cup-winners Cup match. Mons Ivar Mjelde had scored twice and Brann had good chances to increase their lead, dominating play against a tame Dutch side. That vital away goal gave PSV an advantage for the second leg they hardly deserved.

Rosenborg also had the nasty experience of losing to a last-minute goal against Porto in the Champions League. To win the game 1-0 like that must have left the Portuguese wondering what they had done to deserve so much good fortune.

The players in the Norway team against Hungary in the World Cup qualifier certainly knew how to exploit the final moments of a match. The score was 0-0 with the game well into its last 10 minutes, and frustration had crept into the Norwegian play. Kjetil Rekdal once again proved to be the saviour, scoring three goals in the space of seven minutes to give Norway a seemingly convincing 3-0 win.

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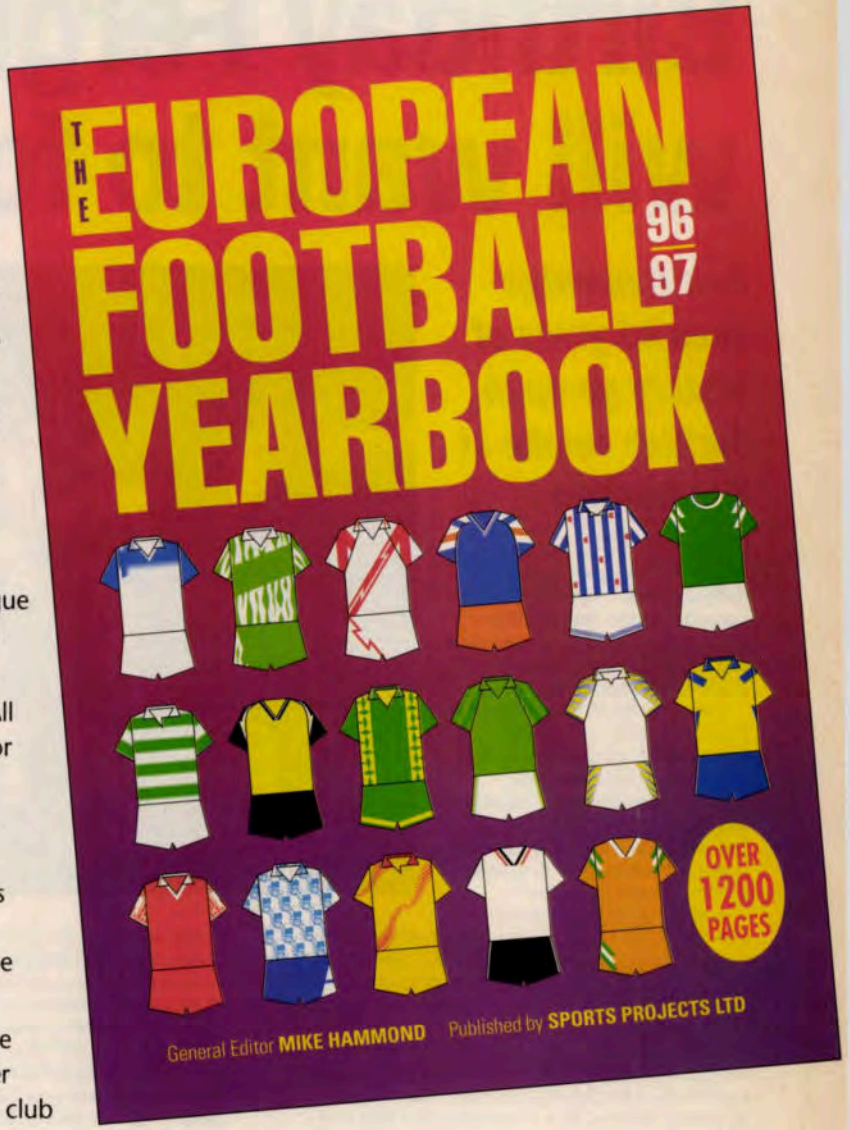

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Birthday Ferguson will want to forget

Keir Radnedge sees 40 years of history go up in Turkish smoke at Old Trafford

Turkish delight . . . Fenerbahce celebrate at Old Trafford

ONE OF Europe's proudest competitive records disappeared into the Manchester night air as Fenerbahce secured one of the greatest victories in Turkish club history.

United had never lost at home in 40 years of European competition, despite entertaining the likes of Real Madrid, Milan, Barcelona and Juventus down the years. The record had not been expected to fall to a Turkish side who had collapsed like a punctured balloon after going behind a fortnight earlier in Istanbul.

Quite the opposite: United were expected to stroll to a three or four-goal victory which would all but ensure their presence in the quarter-finals next March. That was considered the appropriate manner in which to celebrate Alex Ferguson's 10th anniversary as Old Trafford manager.

But this Manchester United team are not the prospective world-beaters about whom the English media had fantasised on the flight back from Istanbul. Thus they were deservedly defeated by a Turkish team who held both shape and patience and whose tackling – in a markedly foul-free game – was powerful yet clean and decisive.

United badly missed a centre-forward: Eric Cantona, as the French know and the big Italian clubs always have suspected, fades under the pressure of close marking. Playing him at the apex of attack, with two men guaranteed on top of him, was a waste of talent. Jordi Cruyff continues to look a player in search of a role, and the absence of the battered Gary Pallister was underlined by the command exerted by Uche Ukechuwku in the heart of the Fenerbahce defence.

Jay Jay Okocha was probably man of the match. He did try to overplay his hand every now and again but he was endlessly creative, worked hard and always was available for pressured team-mates.

A shot from Elvir Bolic caught a deflection off David May's boot and curled over Peter Schmeichel for the only goal.

Fenerbahce's Danish defender, Jes Hogh, thought the qualifying race had turned in their favour. Yet United still need 'only' four points from two games because they are guaranteed a match aggregate advantage over Fenerbahce if the teams finish level on points.

Juventus appear unassailable at the top of the group, if not in the competition itself. They stormed past Rapid Vienna with two goals each from Boksic and Del Piero, Montero contributing the other in a 5-0 rout in Turin.

"We're looking good in every sense and got angry after our Serie A draw in Rome," said coach Marcello Lippi, who experimented with a new attacking line-up. "When we play like that, every other club will have a hard time staying with us."

Italian rivals Milan kept their hopes alive when a last-minute goal from ex-Juve hero Roberto Baggio clinched a 4-2 win over IFK Gothenburg in the Stadio Meazza. Milan, beaten in two of their previous three matches, are now in second place behind Porto.

Milan took the lead after three minutes through Croat Zvonimir Boban and went 2-0 up 10 minutes later with a Demetrio Albertini penalty. But goals from Jesper Blomqvist and Stefan Pettersson levelled the score before Tomas Locatelli restored Milan's lead. The game hung in the balance before Baggio soothed the concerns of owner Silvio Berlusconi and coach Oscar Washington Tabarez.

Serb winger Ljubimko Drulovic was Porto's man of the match against Rosenborg, scoring once and setting up two goals as they won 3-0 to reach the last eight.

Porto, who maintained their 100 per cent record, opened the scoring in the 31st minute when Drulovic slipped a pass through defender Otto Bragstad's legs for Slovenian midfielder Zlatko Zahovic to score. Drulovic made it two from a free-kick nine minutes later, and Brazilian Arturo Oliveira completed the scoring.

Viorel Moldovan scored twice in the first half to lift Grasshopper to a 3-1 win over Auxerre and edge the Swiss champions closer to a quarter-final place. Moldovan put Grasshopper ahead in the 17th minute and they increased their lead when Kubilay Turkylimaz was brought down by Alain Goma and Moldovan scored from the penalty. Auxerre cut the deficit when Mats Gren deflected home a shot from Frederic Danjou but Gren, the Grasshopper skipper, made amends 12 minutes later at the other end.

Atletico Madrid struck twice late in the first half on their way to a 2-1 win over Borussia Dortmund, and thus went top of group B on goal difference. Atletico's Milinko Pantic was their inspiration against a Dortmund side significantly weakened by the absences of Matthias Sammer and Jurgen Kohler.

Poland's Widzew Lodz gained their first points with a 2-0 victory over Steaua Bucharest.

THIRD MATCHDAY (Oct 16)

GROUP A

AJAX 4 (Dani 25, 41, Babangida 83, Wooter 90)
RANGERS 1 (Durrant 88)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 48,467. **Ref:** Krug (Ger)
Ajax: Van der Sar - Veldman, F de Boer, Bogarde, R de Boer, Babangida, Overmars, Reuser (Witschge 42), Scholten, Marcio Santos, Dani (Wooter 79).
Rangers: Snelders - Cleland, Albertz, Gough, Bjorklund, McCall, Gascoigne*, Laudrup (Van Vossen 81), McInnes (Miller 81), Moore, Ferguson (Durrant 84).
* = *Gascoigne sent off, 29min.*

AUXERRE 1 (Deniaud 42)
GRASSHOPPER 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 19,000. **Ref:** Pedersen (Nor)
Auxerre: Charbonnier - Goma, West, Danjou, Rabarivony, Violeau, Henna, Saib, Lamouchi (Sibierski 83), Deniaud, Diomede.
Grasshopper: Zuberbuhler - Thuler (Magnin 81), Gren, Smiljanic, Haas, Comisetti (Berger 68), Vogel, Lombardo, Esposito (Subiat 75), Moldovan, Turkyilmaz.

GROUP B

ATLETICO MADRID 0
BORUSSIA DORTMUND 1 (Reuter 51)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 51,000. **Ref:** Piraux (Belg)
Atletico: Molina - Toni, Solozabal, Santi, Aguilera (Lopez 78), Geli, Pantic, Simeone, Bejbl (Juan Carlos 75), Esnaider, Kiko.
Dortmund: Klos - Julio Cesar (Kree 67), Lambert, Kohler, Reuter, Zorc, Heinrich, Ricken (Kirovski 71), Feiersinger, Tretschok (Herrlich 86), Chapuisat.

STEAUA BUCHAREST 1 (Bogusz og 82)
WIDZEW LODZ 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,500. **Ref:** Bikas (Gre)
Steaua: Stelea - Csik, Filipescu, Baciu, Zamfirescu, Nagy, Militaru, Calin (Rosu 46), Lacatus, Serban, Sabin Ilie (Ciocoiu 46; Miu 90).
Widzew: Szczesny - Bogusz, Bajor, Lapinski, Wojtala, Michalski, Miaszkiewicz (Zajac 84), Szymkowiak, Majak, Dembinski, Citko.

GROUP C

FENERBAHCE 0
MANCHESTER UTD 2 (Beckham 55, Cantona 60)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 26,200. **Ref:** Diaz Vega (Spa)
Fenerbahce: Rustu - Yagcioglu, Okechukwu, Hogh, Kemalettin, Ibrahim, Tuncay (Tarik 84), Bolic, Okocha, Kostadinov (Aygun 84), Bulent (Erol 65).
Man Utd: Schmeichel - Neville, Irwin, May, Johnsen, Pallister, Cantona, Butt, Beckham, Jordi Cruyff (Poborsky 73), Solskjaer.

RAPID VIENNA 1 (Lesiak 20)
JUVENTUS 1 (Vieri 9)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 48,560. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)
Rapid: Konsel - Ivanov, Schottel, Stoger, Stumpf, Kuhbauer, Prosenik, Lesiack, Wagner (Mandreko 69), Zingler, Heraf.
Juventus: Rampulla - Montero, Porrini, Ferrara, Torricelli, Deschamps (Pessotto 84), Di Livio, Jugovic, Boksic, Vieri (Padovano 63), Tacchinardi (Lombardo 70).

GROUP D

IFK GOTHENBURG 2 (Wahlstedt 75, Alexandersson 85)
MILAN 1 (Weah 53)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 42,450. **Ref:** Wojcik (Pol)
IFK: Ravelli - M Nilsson, J Olsson, Lucic,

Landberg (M Johansson 78), Alexandersson, Lindqvist, Blomqvist, Erlingmark, Pettersson (Wahlstedt 74), A Andersson.
Milan: Rossi - Panucci, Costacurta, Maldini, Desailly, Albertini, Ambrosini, Locatelli (Reiziger 70), Boban, Weah, Simone (Dugarry 78).

ROSENBORG 0
FC PORTO 1 (Jardel 90)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 20,412. **Ref:** Agius (Mal)
Rosenborg: Jamtfall - Heggem, Kvarme, Hoftun, Stensaas (Staurvik 85), Jakobsen*, Strand, Skammelsrud, Soltvedt, Brattbakk, Iversen.
** = Jakobsen sent off, 76min.*
Porto: Hilario - Aloisio, Paulinho Santos, Jorge Costa, Fernando Mendes, Sergio Conceicao (Rui Barros 78), Barroso, Zahovic, Edmilson, Artur, Drulovic (Jardel 69).

FOURTH MATCHDAY (Oct 30)

GROUP A
GRASSHOPPER 3 (Moldovan 17, 29pen, Gren 59)
AUXERRE 1 (Danjou 48)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 19,200. **Ref:** Zhuk (Bls)
Grasshopper: Zuberbuhler - Haas, Gren, Smiljanic, Thuler, Lombardo (Gamperle 90), Yakin, Esposito (Magnin 85), Vogel (Comisetti 79), Moldovan, Turkyilmaz.
Auxerre: Charbonnier - Danjou, Goma, West, Henna, Violeau, Moussa Saib, Assati, Marlet, Sibierski, Diomede (Tasfaout 66).

RANGERS 0
AJAX AMSTERDAM 1 (Scholten 39)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 42,265. **Ref:** Frisk (Swe)
Rangers: Snelders - Albertz, Petric, Bjorklund, Laudrup, Durrant, Robertson, Miller (Van Vossen 59), McInnes (McCoist 81), Sheilds, Wilson (Andersen 85).
Ajax: Van der Sar - Veldman, F de Boer (Wooter 70), R de Boer, Babangida (Dani 72), Witschge, Kluivert, Overmars (Turpijn 79), Scholten, Marcio Santos, Melchiot.

GROUP B
BORUSSIA DORTMUND 1 (Herrlich 17)
ATLETICO MADRID 2 (Roberto 37, Pantic 42)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Vagner (Hun)
Dortmund: Klos - Reuter, Pedersen, Julio Cesar, Tretschok (Ricken 67), Lambert (Kirovski 82), Moller, Zorc, Reinhardt, Herrlich, Chapuisat.
Atletico: Molina - Geli (Lopez 59), Santi, Solozabal, Toni, Roberto, Bejbl, Pantic (Aguilera 83), Vizcaino, Esnaider (Pablo 79), Kiko.

WIDZEW LODZ 2 (Majak 40, Czerwiec 48)
STEAUA BUCHAREST 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Cesari (Ita)
Widzew: Szczesny - Szymkowiak, Lapinski, Wojtala, Citko, Michalski, Dembinski (Wyciszkiewicz 87), Czerwiec, Majak, Bogusz, Michalczuk.
Steaua: Stelea - R Nagy, Csik, Prodan, Lacatus (Ciocoiu 75), Militaru, Calin (Sabin Ilie 57), Adrian Ilie, Zamfirescu, Miu, Serban (Rosu 65).

GROUP C
JUVENTUS 5 (Boksic 5, 59, Montero 26, Del Piero 29, 75)
RAPID VIENNA 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Dallas (Sco)
Juventus: Peruzzi - Torricelli, Montero, Ferrara, Pessotto (Porrini 70), Di Livio (Lombardo 64), Jugovic, Deschamps, Zidane, Boksic (Padovano 64), Del Piero.
Rapid: Konsel - Ivanov, Schottel, Stoger (Pivarnik 65), Stumpf (Ratajczyk 46), Penksa (Jovanovic 46), Kuhbauer, Prosenik, Mandreko, Zingler, Heraf.

MANCHESTER UNITED 0
FENERBAHCE 1 (Bolic 78)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 53,297. **Ref:** Van der Ende (Hol)
Man Utd: Schmeichel - G Neville (P Neville 82), Irwin, May, Johnsen, Cantona, Butt, Beckham, Cruyff (Scholes 68), Poborsky (Solskjaer 68), Keane.
Fenerbahce: Rustu - Ilker, Uche, Hogh (Bulent 79), Kemalettin, Tuncay (Mustafa 72), Bolic (Tarik 82), Okocha, Kostadinov, Saffet, Erol.

GROUP D
MILAN 4 (Boban 4, Albertini 14pen, Locatelli 44, Baggio 90)
IFK GOTHENBURG 2 (Blomqvist 27, Andersson 32)
HT: 3-2. **Att:** 29,803. **Ref:** Batta (Fra)
Milan: Rossi - Panucci, Maldini, Costacurta, Desailly, Locatelli (Eranio 46), Albertini, Boban, Davids (Coco 84), Weah, Simone (Baggio 64).
IFK: Ravelli - Landberg, J Olsson, Lucic, M Nilsson, Alexandersson (Eriksson 75), Erlingmark, Lindqvist, Blomqvist, A Andersson (Martinsson 81), Pettersson.

FC PORTO 3 (Zahovic 32, Drulovic 41, Artur Oliveira 60)
ROSENBORG 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 18,500. **Ref:** Heynemann (Ger)
Porto: Hilario - Joao Pinto I, Aloisio, Jorge Costa, Fernando Mendes, Paulinho Santos, Rui Barros (Conceicao 59), Zahovic, Edmilson (Barroso 73), Drulovic, Artur Oliveira (Jardel 61).
Rosenborg: Jamtfall - Kvarme, Bragstad (Sorli 45), Hoftun, Stensaas, Strand (Fjortoft 79), Skammelsrud, Soltvedt, Heggem, Brattbakk, Iversen.

TABLES AFTER FOUR ROUNDS

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Grasshopper	4	3	0	1	7	2	9
Ajax	4	3	0	1	6	2	9
Auxerre	4	2	0	2	4	5	6
Rangers	4	0	0	4	2	10	0

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
At. Madrid	4	3	0	1	10	3	9
Bor. Dortmund	4	3	0	1	7	3	9
Widzew Lodz	4	1	0	3	4	7	3
St. Bucharest	4	1	0	3	1	9	3

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	4	3	1	0	8	1	10
Man. Utd	4	2	0	2	4	2	6
Fenerbahce	4	1	1	2	2	4	4
Rapid Vienna	4	0	2	2	2	9	2

GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Porto	4	4	0	0	9	3	12
Milan	4	2	0	2	11	8	6
IFK Gothenburg	4	1	0	3	7	10	3
Rosenborg	4	1	0	3	4	10	3

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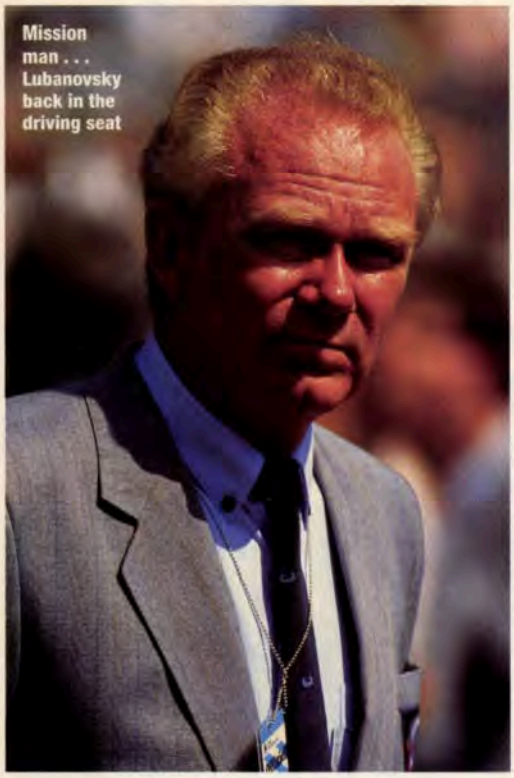
Question 1: Name the five British clubs who have won the Champions Cup


Mission man . . . Lubanovsky back in the driving seat

Ukraine

Lubanovsky returns

Dynamo turn back the clocks and ask former coach to try and resume silver service

VETERAN coach Valery Lubanovsky is returning to take charge at Kiev Dynamo, at the age of 56.

Lubanovsky is a former Dynamo and USSR player who went on to become one of the most experienced coaches in the game. In his previous 16-year spell with the club, he led them to eight championships, four cups, the Cup-winners Cup twice and the Supercup once.

He also coached the USSR national squad and, since leaving Kiev in 1990, he has coached the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait.

Two wins in a row have given Ukraine a surprisingly high standing in the qualifying competition for the World Cup finals in France.

Although only four of the men who played in the 1-0 defeat of Northern Ireland appeared against Portugal in the second match. The Ukrainians fully deserved their 2-1 win before a record 51,000 crowd in Kiev's Olympic Stadium.

Popov opened the scoring after four minutes, when goalkeeper Vitor Baia failed to hold a shot from Zubov, and although the Portuguese equalised seven minutes from time, through Joao Pinto, skipper Maksimov hit the winner with a spectacular 'banana' shot.

Maksimov and Scripnic, a vastly experienced defender who now plays in Germany with Werder Bremen, were the outstanding players.

This victory was compensation for Kiev Dynamo's defeat by Rapid Vienna in the qualifying competition for the Champions League. Although Dynamo had nine internationals in their squad, they lost 6-2 on aggregate.

This meant that they had to be content with a place in the UEFA Cup, in which they lost 2-1 on aggregate to Neuchatel Xamax at the first round stage. They were also beaten 4-3 in the domestic League by newcomers Vorskla Polaval.

OLEG ZADERNOVSKY

Russia

Spoiling tactics

RUSSIAN football has suffered further setbacks with violence on and off the pitch marring an absorbing end to the League season.

A riot involving around 500 CSKA Moscow fans overshadowed the penultimate round of matches, leaving more than 55 injuries after battles with police following CSKA's 3-1 home defeat to Chernomorets Novorossiisk.

On the pitch, Alania Vladikavkaz's surge to the brink of a second successive championship, after trailing Moscow Spartak and Rotor Volgograd for much of the season, hasn't been without its troubles.

Sergei Timofeev had his professional licence withdrawn after an elbow incident left Lokomotiv's Andrei Solomatin with a broken facial bone. Timofeev can now play only at an amateur level, unless by some chance an appeal is upheld.

Trouble spot . . . Timofeev thrown out of professional game

The assault was a symptom of Alania's shortening fuse during a disappointing spell which saw them lose to Rangers in a Champions League qualifier. Tempers had already frayed to such an extent that Omari Tetradze, perhaps Russia's best player in the European Championship, was suspended in disgrace for the rest of the season after attacking a linesman.

The coach, Valeri Gazzayev, claims there is a plot to prevent his club retaining the League title because the country's soccer bosses would be much happier to see a Moscow team finish as champions.

Despite all this Alania, the first non-Moscow club to win the championship, are in pole position after a 2-0 win at relegated Tekstilshchik Kamyshin. Spartak, their main rivals for the title, could only draw 1-1 with Rostselmash Rostov which means both teams are level on points, with Alania ahead on goals.

Rotor, leaders before the last round of matches, face struggling Uralmash Yekaterinburg in their final game but, following their 2-0 defeat at Lokomotiv, which saw them drop to third place, they can only win the title if their two rivals lose.

An intriguing finale that, hopefully, will be played out in relative calm.

VICTOR GUSEV

Czech Republic

Spring test for Uhrin

THE Czechs are either tired after Euro 96 or just face the problem of gathering players who have a greater duty to their clubs.

Patrik Berger, Karel Poborsky and Pavel Srnicek must be feeling the pace with League, Cup and World Cup qualifying games.

At least Srnicek, despite his problems behind the Newcastle defence, is playing first-team football and enjoying an international comeback, while former Sparta player and hero of Euro 96, Petr Kouba, smoulders in the reserves at Deportivo La Coruna.

National coach Dusan Uhrin told Kouba he cannot select a 'stiff' so it was only the bench for Kouba against Spain at a sold-out Letna.

Only Michal Hornak of the home-based players made the starting line-up but they could not get past Andoni Zubizarreta. The Czechs are now third in the qualifying group behind Spain and Yugoslavia.

Home performances provided the launch pad for Euro 96 qualification but now the points dropped in Prague make the task even of securing second place a formidable one.

After the next, difficult tie in Belgrade there is no further World Cup game until April, so there is time to regroup. It will be an interesting spring, with the Yugoslavs due for the return in Prague before the visit of the Slovaks for a first-ever competitive encounter.

These are just the sort of games Uhrin could do without when his star turns are likely to be involved in title build-ups and cup finals.

A yellow card for Pavel Kuka in the Spanish match did not help, and the usually tactically aware Czech coach puzzled many by replacing Poborsky with Vladimir Smicer instead of throwing on another forward in a desperate attempt to crack the largely past and present Barcelona defence.

In the League, there are new and unlikely leaders, Liberec, who replaced Boby Brno by winning 1-0 in Hradec Kralove while the Moravians were suffering their heaviest defeat of the season, 4-1 at Jablonec. Dukla Prague are thriving after promotion from Division Three.

BOB VAUGHAN

Srnicek . . . back in frame

Bulgaria

Bonev's job gets tough

A NARROW win in the Grand Duchy kept the wolf from the door, which may now be shut on Hristo Stoichkov.

The rest of the old guard were on duty in Luxembourg to see the home side equalise after Krassimir Balakov's penalty. Emil Kostadinov scored what proved to be the winner before the interval and Vassiliev was sent off after an hour.

It was not a convincing performance and coach Bonev's task of selecting the squad for the tie with Cyprus is not an easy one, particularly as there were also bookings for Hraistov, Trifon Ivanov, Zlatko Yankov and Daniel Borimirov.

The championship is certainly an open race. Revived leaders CSKA's 3-0 win against Botev, while Levski drew 1-1 at home to Neftochimik, put the former army men top.

Lok are three points further back after winning 5-1 against struggling Ravovski.

Kiustendil's Marchliev leads the scorers, though only CSKA and Levski Sofia are managing two goals per game.

BOB VAUGHAN

Hungary

Csank sinking

THREE World Cup points to date in Group Three makes for poor reading and new coach Janos Csank seems unable to get any more out of his flock than his predecessors.

The latest disappointment was the 3-0 defeat in Oslo, where the Norwegians were held for 83 minutes before Rekdal notched an extraordinary seven-minute hat-trick. Bookings for Urban, Nagy and Sekok made matters worse.

The only consolation for Csank is that the Swiss are faring no better and there is a chance that second place can be salvaged, so long as they win away to Azerbaijan.

The unexpected 3-2 home win for Ferencvaros against Newcastle in the UEFA Cup brought some joy at least, though not the 4-0 loss in the return leg.

BOB VAUGHAN

Romania

All right now

GENERAL IORDANESCU seems to have redeployed his army on the field quite successfully in the World Cup qualifying games, despite the problems of his squad being spread across Europe.

He is getting by with his old retainers and maximum points are on the board. There were no slips against Iceland and there is a break before the Romanians venture to Maceonia to tackle another so-called 'minnow'.

Before that, Steaua will hope to have improved matters in the Champions League. The thrashings in Madrid and Dortmund may have put a quarter-final place beyond Stelea and Co, but if the Spaniards are made to suffer in the Ruhr perhaps they can be beaten in Bucharest. Widzew might be made to yield the points in Lodz to take the 'Stars' to the quarter-finals, possibly to meet Ajax.

A 3-1 win over neighbours Sportul saw Steaua return to the top, level with FC National and a revived Dinamo, who could only draw with 'U' in Cluj. Sabin is putting away the goals, with an average of one a game.

Petrolul, in last place, have yet to win a match and relegation for these former representatives in Europe could be on the cards. Or perhaps it should be coupons.

BOB VAUGHAN

Slovakia

Slovan slip up

SLOVAN's reign as champions could be coming to an end following defeats in Presov and Bardejov.

All this while Spartak were winning saw them go top, with Tatra in second position.

Despite their financial investments, First FC Kosice are sitting less than comfortably in fourth place but they are close to signing national goalkeeper Ladislav Molnar, who has lost his place at the Telehne Pole to Miroslav Koenig.

The national team face Spain in the Canaries, for which hope is low despite the fact that maximum points were taken from the ties at home to Malta and against Faroe Islands in Toftir.

BOB VAUGHAN

Poland

Bonus time

THE Polish FA have decided to pay bumper bonuses for World Cup performances – £160,000 for a win against England or Italy, and £60,000 for victory over Georgia or Moldava.

A draw will be rewarded with half the above rates, and there will be an additional bonus for players who turn up well in advance of matches. Most of the players with clubs outside Poland arrive with little time to spare.

The Poles went close to a payout at Wembley but eventually lost 2-1 to an unimpressive England side. "This was our best performance for years," said coach Anton Piechniczek. He was particularly impressed with Marek Citko of Widzew Lodz and Piotr Nowak, of Munich 1860.

Widzew Lodz have had a poor run in the Champions League, losing their first three matches, and are a point behind leaders Legia in the domestic chase.

Violence between police and fans is becoming common, and there was a particularly bad outbreak at the game between Lech Poznan and Legia Warsaw, with 38 policemen injured.

DARIUSZ KUROWSKI

Pro-file Krisztian Lisztes

Club Ferencvaros
Country Hungary
Born July 2, 1976
Previous clubs
None
International caps
None
Honours
Hungarian League
1995, 1996

HE IS the typical Hungarian footballer, the cheeky Budapest lad with the curly hair who can do anything on the ball.

But Krisztian Lisztes is playing in the country's First Division at a time when the game may only just be showing signs of recovery from a dire decade.

Corruption, the poorest-ever Hungarian national team, weak performances in Europe and the failure to qualify for the last World Cup and European Championship have dented the development of the game in one of Europe's footballing hot-beds.

Last year, things began to look up, starting with 1994-95 champions Ferencvaros surprisingly putting out Anderlecht.

Fradi, the Green and Whites from Budapest's Ninth's District, with their remodelled stadium on the Ulloi utca highway, went into the Champions League with Lisztes as the focal point in midfield.

The prodigious talent made his debut in 1992-93, with 14 appearances plus two as a substitute, and he scored two goals on the club's way to their championship success.

He had served his apprenticeship in the youth teams before joining Florian Albert Junior and the since-departed Peter Lipcsei, in a team where an aging Lajos Detari was playing out his last half-season.

Lisztes, who turned 20 as the season began, has had to assume the mantle of Lipcsei and Detari – and quickly, too. Defeat in the current Champions Cup preliminaries and drawing Newcastle in the UEFA Cup may have been a blessing in disguise.

Fradi were not particularly fancied even for the home game, against Kevin Keegan's expensively assembled runners-up from the north of England. But Lisztes, scheming and battling in midfield with England internationals David Batty and Robert Lee, scored twice to send the fans into Hungarian raptures.

It was just a shame that he missed the second leg at St James's Park, although with Newcastle in such rampant form it is unlikely he would have made much impact.

All good for club and player, but will Ferencvaros be able to hang on to Lisztes?

The answer could be positive for he still has to fill out. Yet these supposed physical flaws didn't deter Bayern Munich from showing interest in Lisztes. They wanted to test him during the last winter break in an indoor tournament, and although discussions came to nothing the youngster hasn't been forgotten.

He may be better advised to build himself up at home under new Ferencvaros coach Zoltan Varga, the successor to Bezso Novak and a man who knows plenty about playing abroad.

The national team could do with Lisztes, for his ball-playing skills, running and enthusiasm. Hungary are far from out of contention in their World Cup group. A revival is due at international level.

BOB VAUGHAN

Moving times . . . Romario can't settle either in Rio or Valencia

Brazil

Romario returns on loan

Maverick striker is back with struggling Flamengo – for now

IT TOOK less than three months for Valencia and Romario to become fed up with each other. Flamengo sold the striker to the Spanish club this summer but he was there for just 78 days, during which he returned to Brazil twice, fell out with coach Luis Aragones and played only five times.

Now he is back to team up with Bebeto. The two clubs needed 14 days of negotiations, during which Valencia announced Romario was leaving and then, the very next day, said he was staying, before the tempestuous World Cup hero finally returned to Brazil, this time on loan.

The final straw, apparently, had been when Romario turned up late for training and was promptly dropped. He had already been left out of the UEFA Cup matches against Bayern Munich after attempting to persuade the club president to ditch Aragones and bring in his chum Joel Santana, coach of Flamengo.

Romario's problems had been closely followed in the boardroom at Flamengo, where directors were desperate to find a way out of yet another crisis at the self-styled "best supported club in Brazil". The team got off to a reasonable start in the Brazilian championship but then slumped alarmingly, losing four matches, three of them by a score of 4-1, including one to arch-rivals Vasco da Gama.

Flamengo's main deficiencies are a static central defence, a lack of creativity in midfield and the cautious tactics employed by coach Santana. It did not really seem logical, therefore, that president Kleber Leite should try to keep the ship afloat by signing a centre-forward.

But there has been little logic about Leite's behaviour as president. He has done well in bringing big-name players such as Bebeto and Romario to the club but elsewhere his signings (it is the directors, rather than the coach, who usually decide on new players in Brazil) have been bizarre.

In reality, Romario's signing was much ado about nothing. If, as seems likely, Flamengo finish outside the top eight of the championship and miss out on a quarter-final place, Romario will play only six games before a two-month summer break. When action resumes, it will be in the Rio de Janeiro state championship, when most of the games are against semi-professional teams who offer the likes of Flamengo little more than a training session with a few violent tackles thrown in.

Flamengo fans, a fickle bunch, still went along in reasonable numbers to see Romario's return against Internacional at the Maracana, most of them wearing the club's red and black shirt. But many seemed to be fearing the worst and could be seen carrying a spare shirt to wear home after the game in case Flamengo lost.

Their worst fears were soon realised. Flamengo briefly played some decent football and took the lead in the first half but just before half-time Romario pulled up as he was challenging for the ball and hobbled off injured. Their problems were exacerbated when Internacional scored twice in the last six minutes, both goals coming from substitute Fabiano, to win the game. Romario's injury was not as bad as it first appeared, but the two late goals, by a team Flamengo were directly competing with for a quarter-final place caused enormous damage, leaving Internacional eighth.

Corinthians, who have been searching since the tournament began for somebody capable of putting the ball in the net, were 10th, while Carlos Alberto Parreira's Sao Paulo, leaders early on in the season, had slumped to 17th after a run of 10 games without a win.

The Rio de Janeiro teams fared little better. Despite their appalling run, Flamengo were still the highest-placed of the 'cariocas'. Vasco director Eurico Miranda, in typical fashion, had declared that beating Flamengo 4-1 was more important than winning the championship and his team lost their next four games. Last year's champions Botafogo paid the price for selling their top players and were one place below Flamengo, while Fluminense, semi-finalists last year, were fighting relegation.

The teams in form included the two Belo Horizonte clubs Cruzeiro and Atletico Mineiro, the two Porto Alegre teams, Gremio and Internacional, plus two surprise teams with little tradition in the competition, Sport from Recife and Atletico Paranaense from Curitiba. Guarani, who come from Campinas 100 kilometres from Sao Paulo, were also in the top eight, despite employing 10 coaches this year.

BRIAN HOMEWOOD

Mexico

A game suffering from greed

THE number of teams in Mexico's Premier League has changed 16 times since 1943, when professionalism came in.

Until 1970, the champions were the team who had most points on a home-and-away basis. Then TV took advantage of the weaknesses of team owners and officials, and the play-off system was implemented. This system in turn has changed 17 times in 25 years, always catering to the whims of commercialism.

New changes were introduced for the current season. There are now two Leagues, in winter and summer. The championship will be decided in a home-and-away final to be played between the winners of each league. In order to reach the finals there are two play-offs.

Each may have to go to 20 games to decide the winner – so 40 extra

Chilavert stays

GOALKEEPER Jose Luis Chilavert ***(right)*** of Paraguay will continue to play for Argentinian champions Velez Sarsfield for at least another two years.

He wanted to leave Argentina after a judge, investigating a post-match fight two years earlier, gave him a three-month suspended prison sentence and a 13-match ban (not recognised by the Argentinian FA, who had banned him previously for the same offence). But his transfer to an Italian club fell through, if indeed it ever existed.

The agent handling the deal never specifically named the club, and seems to have jumped the gun in announcing the transfer while still offering Chilavert's services to several clubs.

Argentinian soccer journalists voted Chilavert top player of 1995-96, awarding him the local version of the golden ball.

games might be played above the 308 regular games.

TV, radio and other commercial enterprises are doing what they are paid to do: obtain more revenue. But the Mexican Federation are again guilty of complacency, mainly because they belong to two groups: those who run a team with the exclusive purpose of obtaining a profit, and those (the majority) who have entered professional soccer just as a hobby to show their friends that they are part of the most popular sport in the world.

In both cases, most of those individuals know nothing about soccer management, and thus are easily guided (or misguided) by the merchants.

Soccer is big business, difficult to measure because it is linked to a very well organised national and international network of TV and radio stations, plus other media, international brands, promoters and advertising agencies. It is being exported to Latin America and the USA, where it has found a wide audience among the Spanish-speaking population.

In their quest for power, team owners and officials are willing to sell anything – including the national team.

For all practical and commercial purposes the national team is owned by Televisa, so the rival TV network started a permanent attack against the team. They have forgotten that soccer is a game, that the other CONCACAF countries have progressed. This media war has divided people and players involved with the Mexican side.

Coach Bora Milutinovic is being paid by Televisa and because results in the

Under fire . . . national coach Bora Milutinovic

World Cup qualifiers are far from satisfactory, the Mexican media is having a field day. Milutinovic has fuelled the attacks by defending those who selected him.

Mexico should qualify for the 1998 World Cup because they are the best in the CONCACAF region.

But a new administration is needed to calm things down in these battles of greed which jeopardise the stability and future of the 1,500 professional players maintaining the spectacle of soccer in Mexico.

Atlante, Guadalajara and Santos Laguna led three of the League groups with six games to play. Leon and Necaxa were level at the top of the other section.

CARLOS F RAMIREZ

Argentina

Drugs raids at two clubs

ARGENTINIAN football was thrown into turmoil by court-ordered police raids on two clubs – Boca Juniors and Deportivo Espanol – the FA offices and a drug-testing laboratory, because of suspicions that players' samples had been switched.

When Diego Maradona left the field in Boca's penultimate match last season, he was drug tested and immediately rushed to a rehabilitation clinic in Switzerland. That same day, Deportivo Espanol's Juan Vargas also was tested.

During the following week it was announced that Vargas had tested positive for cocaine and rumours immediately started of a $50,000 induced switch of samples.

Vargas, suspended for six months, later owned up to his addiction. But the investigation continues as the little-known Vargas bought a flat for $50,000 a few weeks later. FA chief Julio Grondona has had to appear in court under suspicion of helping a cover-up.

Maradona, a known cocaine addict, is so far not involved but his manager, Guillermo Coppola, has been jailed pending trial on a drugs peddling charge. Maradona is still under contract to Boca but has not played for them this season. New-look Boca continue to struggle, languishing in sixth place. Carlos Bilardo's position as coach is in the balance.

The team's only worthwhile performance this season was a 3-2 home win over River Plate, for whom it was a first defeat. They top the National A Division with a 6-1-1 record (and 22 goals) a point ahead of Independiente.

River Plate sold two top players at the beginning of the season – striker Hernan Crespo and half-back Matias Alemyeda (both to Italian clubs) – and were not expected to do so well. In their last match, Uruguayan international Enzo Francescoli scored his 100th goal for the club.

Champions Velez Sarsfield are in contention three points from the top, but their victories have been laborious, some with late winners, and they currently seem more interested in winning the South American Super Cup for past Libertadores Cup winners.

Fifth-placed Racing Club, now under another former World Cup coach, Alfio Basile, are very erratic and hardly in title-contesting form but small club Lanus are again close, in joint second place, and playing good football.

ERIC WEIL

Chile

Champions down to eight

COLO COLO retained their six-point lead in the First Division with three matches to go, while Mario Verner of lowly Wanderers remains top scorer with 27 goals.

Colo Colo beat champions Universidad de Chile 2-0 in the Santiago derby, scoring their second goal, a penalty, in the final minute when UC were down to eight men; both their goalkeepers had left the field – one injured, one sent off. Afterwards 107 fans were detained because of rioting.

For the following match, Universidad had 13 players either injured or suspended and only drew with lowly Atacama, but by then they were already virtually out of the title race.

IN BOLIVIA, the top two teams of the two second-stage sections of the professional championship (Bolivar, Oriente Petrolero, San Jose, Independiente Petrolero) and the top teams of the previous stage (Real Santa Cruz, The Strongest) are playing in the final round.

IN PERU, joint second-placed Alianza Lima and Universitario de Deportes drew a poor game 0-0.

As a result, Sporting Cristal increased their lead to six points with two games to go and needed only one more point to win the decentralised championship for the third year running.

IN PARAGUAY, defending champions Olimpia won the closing championship – Guarani had won the opening championship when Olimpia were focusing on the Libertadores Cup – and currently the top eight clubs are playing a final round.

IN COLOMBIA, America of Cali top the table after nine games, four points ahead of Nacional, who have again dropped former international goalkeeper Rene Higuita for repeatedly missing training.

The other Cali team, Deportivo, who carried all before them last season, dropped to joint fifth after topping the standings for five games, but then picking up only four points from their next four.

IN ECUADOR, Nacional top the six-team final round after three games thanks to three bonus points obtained by winning the season's opening championship. If they also win the final round they will be champions but, if not, they will have to play-off for the title with the winner.

Deportivo Quito are joint leaders without bonus points and defending champions Barcelona, also without bonus points, are a point behind.

Barcelona have signed striker Eduardo Hurtado, one of Ecuador's top players, on loan from Los Angeles Galaxy, and changed their coach, dismissing Argentinian Patricio Hernandez and signing Colombian Diego Umana.

Loan man . . . Ecuador's Eduardo Hurtado

Uruguay

Penarol make it four

PENAROL won the First Division title for the fourth year running, and the 33rd time since the start of professional soccer in 1932.

As in the previous season, Penarol won the opening championship and Nacional the closing championship, the latter with two games to go. In this round Penarol had a modest 4-3-4 record and coach Jorge Fossati stayed only because of the support of long-serving club president Jose Damiani and the players while the search was on for another coach.

Penarol won the first play-off final 1-0, De Avila scoring after 26 minutes, with not much to choose between the sides. The second final was even more closely fought, ending 1-1. Antonio Pachaco put Penarol ahead after 54 minutes and Martin Parodi equalised on the hour. When Nacional scored, Penarol were down to nine men and Nacional to 10, and just before the end a second Nacional player was sent off.

The eight clubs behind Nacional and Penarol and the top provincial teams were playing a two-leg knock-out to qualify four of them for the six-team 'Liguilla' (with Nacional and Penarol) from which the top two go into next year's Libertadores Cup.

ERIC WEIL

CONCACAF
United States

Fans earn the tribute

Paul Gardner on the successes and failures of the first MLS season

Final kiss . . . Washington's John Harkes celebrates

MLS got the match they wanted for their first-ever final: Washington DC United versus Los Angeles Galaxy. Two of the more attractive teams, an East against West confrontation, and a pretty good selection of the top stars: Jorge Campos, Cobi Jones and Eduardo Hurtado for Los Angeles, John Harkes, Marco Etcheverry and Jaime Moreno for Washington.

But if MLS got lucky with the teams, nobody could have picked a worse day for the game. Rain all night, rain all morning – and rain all afternoon, too, right through the game. And in Foxboro Stadium there are no covered seats.

A disaster – yet it turned into a triumph. Amazingly, more than 34,000 fans turned up and defied the monsoon. And the teams – despite a field that squelched like a rice paddy, and wind gusts of up to 50 mph – somehow managed to produce a pretty good game with a dramatic ending.

After only five minutes Hurtado headed Galaxy into the lead – banishing the possibility of that nightmare of American soccer, a 0-0 tie. For the rest of the first half, while Washington slipped and slid, Galaxy seemed to have matters pretty much under control.

The impression was confirmed when Chris Armas put them 2-0 up, 11 minutes into the second half. But a 2-0 lead is supposed to be a dangerous scoreline . . . for the team in the lead. So it proved for Galaxy, who showed signs of relaxing and playing defensively as the game wound down. Washington's pressure increased. Coach Bruce Arena sent on substitutes Tony Sanneh and Shawn Medved, while Moreno, in particular, was causing Galaxy all sorts of problems.

With 17 minutes left, Washington struck. Galaxy defender Arash Noamouz, tormented by Moreno, brought him down out on the left. Etcheverry took the free-kick, and his left foot delivered the ball perfectly – just over the Galaxy defence to Sanneh, who headed in.

Nine more minutes of relentless Washington pressure brought the equaliser, from Medved. Again Moreno started it out on the left, again Galaxy fouled him, and again Etcheverry delivered the perfect free-kick. As it swerved low into the area, Campos tried to punch clear – but put the ball to Medved at the edge of the area. His shot was parried brilliantly by Campos but Medved, following up, slammed home the rebound.

So the game went to 30 minutes of sudden-death extra-time, with the possibility of a tiebreaker at the end of that.

Once again, on this remarkable afternoon, MLS got lucky. After only three minutes and a few seconds, the Golden Goal settled matters. Moreno again: holding the ball on the goal line, dribbling around Noamouz and Semioli and winning a corner. In effect, another left-footed free-kick from Etcheverry, and as deadly as before. He put it exactly where he wanted it, right to Eddie Pope, who thumped an unstoppable header into the net.

"Wow!" was MLS Commissioner Doug Logan's comment as he opened the post-game media conference. It had indeed been a wild, Wow! sort of game, though Galaxy defender Robin Fraser did not see it that way: "We blew it," he said.

"We ran out of steam," said coach Lothar Osiander, pointing out that three of his men were nursing injuries and that he was missing key defender Dan Calichman (suspended with three yellows in five play-off games). But he, too, praised Washington.

Etcheverry won the game's Most Valuable Player award, which was unfair to Moreno, but statistics rule here, and Etcheverry had an assist on all three Washington goals. He modestly said: "The real heroes were the fans who came all the way from Washington in this weather."

Immediate agreement from John Harkes: "We thought maybe 15,000 would turn out, but this was incredible. And they stayed with us till the end!"

Even beyond the end. When the team arrived in Washington on Monday morning they found nearly 1000 fans waiting to welcome them.

"Soccer fever is alive in the United States, and it's here to stay," said Harkes. A sentiment eagerly endorsed by MLS, looking back on a pretty successful inaugural year, and preparing for a second season.

The most striking positive note was the response of the fans. The 34,000 who braved the tempest in Foxboro marked a final flourish to a season in which attendances had come in at nearly 50 per cent above predictions.

That meant an extra $4million in ticket income – money that the MLS owners agreed should go straight back into the league, thus doubling the 1997 player-acquisition budget.

Last year deputy commissioner Sunil Gulati spent some $18million acquiring players and paying signing-on bonuses. This year it will be $8million. MLS, aiming to upgrade the level of play quickly, will add a fifth foreigner to each team (though, in approving this measure, the United States Soccer Federation put a three-year limit on it).

Internationals on the MLS shopping list include Carlos Hermosillo, Ramon Ramirez and Zaguinho of Mexico, Alain Sutter (Switzerland), Erwin Sanchez (Bolivia), Fredy Rincon (Colombia), Oscar Ruggeri (Argentina), Bernd Schuster (Germany), and Jose Luis Chilavert (Paraguay). Younger players from the Nigerian and Brazilian Olympic teams are being checked, too.

There also is a possibility of bringing home more members of the United States national team: Thomas Dooley from Germany, Ernie Stewart (Holland), and Jurgen Sommer and Mike Lapper (England).

With this strengthening of the league's playing level, Commissioner Logan is looking for a 15 per cent overall increase in attendances. But the addition of more teams has been put on hold. An earlier announcement that MLS would add two more teams in 1998 is now being played down. The impetus for expansion was primarily to present a better nationwide league for television.

Joe Machnik has been appointed to head the MLS referee programme. Refereeing has presented the usual problem of inconsistency, but a bigger problem has been the extraordinary lack of discipline among players, who repeatedly showed dissent to decisions, and engaged officials in heated arguments.

Perhaps the most pointed MLS failure was in Tampa, a city in which the old NASL Rowdies had great success in the 1970s. But – despite an attractive, award-winning team *(see panel)* – the average attendance was a lowly 11,679 (only Colorado did worse, at 10,276). Further trouble came when an employee was arrested for embezzling $100,000.

MLS responded by firing Tampa general manager Farrukh Quairishi, and moving in a new front-office staff.

The risk of losing some stars is a minor worry for the MLS. So far, only Colombian midfielder Leonel Alvarez of Dallas Burn has been sold, to Mexican club Veracruz. But Sunil Gulati says that "significant" offers have been received from European and South American clubs for Valderrama, Etcheverry, Moreno and Hurtado.

MLS can claim considerable success in the stated aim of developing American players. During the season, a number of talented youngsters have emerged and quickly been put on to the national team roster.

The period leading up to the World Cup qualifiers was not a very settled one for relations between the national team and the US Soccer Federation. For a friendly in Peru in October, all of the top players refused to go. A so-called 'B' team went, and lost 4-1.

The root of the dispute, not surprisingly, was money, with the players being dissatisfied with their bonuses, and requesting a share of royalties and licensing money.

Eventually there was agreement, with $2,500 appearance money per player per World Cup qualifier, $5,000 per World Cup game; $1million to be paid into the player pool on qualification for France 98.

The agreement probably marks the beginning, rather than the end, of player power. Although only national team players are currently involved, it is widely believed that they will soon attempt to create a players union within the MLS.

That is a looming threat that MLS would like to postpone as long as possible. It casts something of a shadow on a highly respectable beginning.

ROLL OF HONOURS
MLS 1996 AWARDS:

Top goalscorer Roy Lassiter, 28 goals (Tampa Bay)
Most valuable player Carlos Valderrama (Tampa Bay)
Coach of the Year Thomas Rongen (Tampa Bay)
Defender of the Year John Doyle (San Jose)
Goalkeeper of the Year Mark Dodd (Dallas Burn)
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Japan aiming for a double

Peter Law sets the scene for the eleventh Asian Cup

TWELVE countries assemble this month in the United Arab Emirates for the eleventh Asian Cup, the jewel in the crown of the Asian Football Confederation.

With the tournament celebrating its 40th anniversary by expanding to accommodate 12 nations for the first time, making this the biggest contest so far, all will be determined to show that the Asian game is making real progress in the wider world.

The qualifying competition helped tune up the sides, with most of the big names prevailing to join hosts UAE and defending champions Japan. All eligible past winners of the title (South Korea, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Japan) stand a realistic chance of more success, lining up alongside some capable outsiders, led by the UAE and China. Six of the finalists have past World Cup finals experience to draw upon.

All of which shows that the competition held on an uninterrupted four-year cycle for four decades, despite political upheaval and difficulty, has great possibilities.

Two newcomers make their debuts. Indonesia and Uzbekistan will line up alongside the more fancied nations. Six of the finalists were present at the last edition, in Japan four years ago.

As for favourites, holders, Japan, beaten 1992 finalists Saudi Arabia, and South Korea look strong and capable. Hosts UAE also fancy their chances – history reveals that six of the 10 past hosts have gone on to win.

Kuwait, Iraq, Iran and Syria will not be too far from home, and fancy their chances of making an impression, while Uzbekistan (the Asian Games winners of 94) China and Thailand (recent winners of the Tiger Cup) all present a good case.

None of the Group A sides lost in the qualifiers, where South Korea had a 100 per cent record, besides scoring 17 times without reply. Kuwait also are hopeful of qualifying from this section, while Indonesia and the UAE are the outsiders.

Group B carries overtones of past wars, with little love lost between former battlefield enemies Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Thailand make up the toughest group.

Holders Japan and China are the sides expected to dominate Group C, while Asian Games winners Uzbekistan and Syria are hoping for a third placing that could extend their stay in the UAE.

For the first time quarter-finals have been added, meaning that only four sides will be eliminated in the first round. Then the event reverts to a knockout formula all the way to the final at the well appointed Zayed Sports City in Abu Dhabi, with a 60,000 capacity.

With the exception of Uzbekistan and Iraq, all the finalists have been busy building towards a peak. As well as Thailand announcing their pedigree by winning the Tiger Cup in September, at press time the Gulf Cup was being contested by Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait.

A number of foreign coaches have been planning their path to glory. As always, some will pay the game's ultimate price if they fail, while new stars are waiting for their recognition, playing for their professional futures.

Asian Cup hopeful . . . Japan's Kazu Miura

With the World Cup qualifiers for France 98 already under way, the Asian Cup is more relevant than ever in the wide world of football. TV will give an international audience a window on the event, the biggest thing in Asian football other than the World Cup.

The game is at last making big strides on the world stage from a growing professional base. The expectation level never has been higher, the stakes never greater.

Taking a grip out East

OF ALL the continental championships in football, the Asian Cup is surprisingly the second most senior competition after the Copa America, predating the African Nations Cup and European Championships.

Hong Kong staged the first event, in September 1956, and South Korea, Israel and South Vietnam joined the hosts to launch this new venture of the fledgling Asian Football Confederation. After only seven matches South Korea lifted the Cup, with a 2-1 victory over Israel.

South Korea made a successful defence of the title as hosts in 1960, again defeating Israel in the final, 3-0. They extended their finals record to eight matches unbeaten. The country had twice been runners-up in the Asian Games, the lesser of the two international titles in Asian football.

The third finals were hosted by Israel in 1964, and once again the hosts won, defeating India by 2-0 in Jaffa.

For the third time in succession the host nation prevailed in 1968. Iran, making their finals debut, won all five games, finishing with a 3-1 victory before their Tehran public. The win helped boost the game in the Arabic countries, where in some nations it had been banned as contrary to religion.

One anomaly was the absence of North Korea, despite their surprising displays in England at the 1966 World Cup, where they became Asia's first quarter-finalist. This was Israel's last entry before being 'politically moved' out of Asia in 1976. Their entry had been controversial among many Muslim nations.

Changes were introduced for the 1972 finals, in Thailand. Iraq and Kuwait were newcomers, with semi-finals and a third-place match included for the first time. Iran added to their winning run, defeating Cambodia in the semi-final while South Korea beat the hosts on penalties after a 1-1 draw.

The Iran-South Korea final attracted only 8,000 fans to Bangkok, home fans staying away in droves. Iran struck first following a scoreless first half, an equaliser consigned the match to extra time, and Khalani hit the winner for the holders after 107 minutes.

Iran became the first nation to be selected to host the finals twice in 1976, as the Shah's men set out to capture a record third success in this competition. Saudi Arabia entered the qualifiers for the first time, as did China, and the qualifiers grew to accommodate 21 entrants.

On a less happy note the tournament was marred by withdrawals, the expanded finals remaining at six following the defections of North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Thailand.

Iran found their best form to overwhelm their opponents, marching confidently into a semi-final. Iraq and Kuwait also made the last four, with China.

Iran beat China 2-0, while Kuwait won by the odd goal in five against Iraq. China took the bronze while Iran and Kuwait battled out the final. In a tight contest, Iran scored the solitary goal to clinch their record hat-trick of titles, this one without conceding a single goal and extending their record to 13 straight victories at the Asian Cup to underline their indomitability.

Kuwait hosted the seventh Asian Cup in 1980, with the finals expanding to accommodate a record 10 finalists. Only 18 entrants contested the qualifiers, with no defections this time round. In Iran, the Ayatollah Khomeni had succeeded the Shah, and football was no longer given the finance enjoyed in the past. But with the title to defend, the regime could not afford to be too parsimonious.

Both North and South Korea lined up among the finalists and met in the semi-final, with the holders Iran and hosts Kuwait contesting the other match. An era ended as the hosts overcame the holders, ending their long undefeated run with a 2-1 triumph. This event provided rich entertainment, with a record 76 goals produced by 24 ties.

South Korea also booked a final ticket after winning by the same score; they reached a record fourth final.

The final provided few good moments as the hosts again won the title, 3-0. Little Kuwait thus became the fourth winner of the title in its seven editions.

The competition was now 24 years old, and winning generated both prestige and pride. While open to professionals, few Asians had found their way into top football elsewhere, the game remaining largely amateur, without too many big name stars or a TV presence in the wider world.

If the 1970s were Iran's decade, new nations were now coming to the fore. No

fewer than 21 hopefuls entered qualifiers for the 1984 finals in Singapore.

Saudi Arabia and Kuwait topped Group A, while goal difference separated China and Iran. For once, South Korea went home bottom of their group, and without a win from four outings. Hosts Singapore also disappointed their fans with their first-round exit. China pulled off a shock 1-0 win over holders Kuwait in their semi-final clash, and penalties separated Saudi Arabia and Iran after a 1-1 draw.

A new name would be inscribed on the winners list, while Kuwait took third place on penalties. In the final, Saudi Arabia scored in each half against China, with Majed Abdullah scoring the decisive second goal.

Qatar hosted the finals of 1988, when Japan made their debut, ending years of lukewarm ambition in this event. They made an early exit.

South Korea and Iran (both with World Cup finals experience in Mexico) clinched semi-final places, with Saudi Arabia and China completing the last four.

The holders preserved their unbeaten run by beating Iran 1-0, while South Korea overcame China 2-1. Iran took bronze medals on penalties, as South Korea prepared for their record fifth appearance in the final.

A tight match ended goalless after extra time, and the holders retained the title after a 4-3 win on penalties.

The tournament celebrated its 10th edition in Japan 1992, but the finals contracted to include only eight finalists. Past winners South Korea and Kuwait were eliminated in the qualifiers, while Japan were preparing to launch their J.League, and were keen to make their home advantage pay. Most sides arrived with European trainers, and the tournament was well organised and of an impressive standard.

Goals were at a premium in Group A as Japan and UAE qualified for the semis, edging out Iran and North Korea. In the other section Saudi Arabia and China had too much firepower for Qatar and Thailand, with Japan v China providing an intriguing semi-final, leaving the holders to face the UAE.

Both produced fine matches, Japan overcoming a fighting Chinese side 3-2, while the holders scored two second-half goals to finish off UAE.

The Hiroshima Stadium was packed to see if the hosts could dump the holders, who were looking to equal Iran's record of three victories. Dutch coach Hans Ooft prepared his side well, with the livewire Kaziu Miura leading his attack. The Saudis were not short of talent and experience, but were under pressure from a Japanese side who imposed themselves in a supercharged atmosphere.

Miura set up fellow striker Takagi to fire home after 36 minutes, and a new name was written on to the trophy. Ooft happily declared: "It's a great day for Japanese football. There's no reason to feel inferior to anybody any more."

Since that day four years ago much has transpired. Saudi Arabia and South Korea at the last World Cup in America; Kazakstan winning the 1994 Asian Games from China; and Saudi Arabia, Japan and South Korea doing well at the Atlanta Olympics. The game certainly has a foothold in the East.

ASIA IN BRIEF

On the glory trail. . . Bellmare in action in the Cup-winners Cup

Japan

Ossie in luck

THIRD TIME proved to be lucky for Shimizu S-Pulse in the Yamasaki Nabisco Cup Final.

Shimuzu, who had been beaten in the two previous finals by Verdy Kawasaki, took revenge with a victory on penalties after a 3-3 draw and gave manager Ossie Ardiles another trophy.

They made hard work of it, being taken to extra time after leading 2-0 with only three minutes of of noraml time remaining. Goals by Hasega and Oliva seemed to have put them clear, but Verdy pulled one back with a goal debited to Shimizu defender Takumi, and equalised through Argel.

Santos, struggling bravely against injury, put Pulse ahead again in the first minute of extra time, only for Bismarck to equalise. And so to penalties, in which Magrao's miss with Verdy's second kick proved costly; the opposition scored from all five.

The imports beat their Japanese counterparts 2-1 in the second Jomo Cup All-Star match before a 40,000 crowd in Tokyo. Antonio and Bismarck scored for the Foreigners, and Maezono pulled back a late consolation goal.

Grampus Eight missed the chance to go joint top of the table on coach Arsene Wenger's last day.

The leaders, Kashima Antlers, lost 9-8 on penalties at home to Sanfrecce Hiroshima, but Grampus fell 1-0 in extra time to Kashima Reysol – who had a long injury list and three players suspended. There was better news for Grampus when they reached the semi-finals of the Asian Cup-winners Cup after their 4-2 aggregate victory over Hong Kong's South China. Bellmare, meanwhile won the first leg of their semi-final tie 1-0 over Ulsan Hyundai of Korea.

Kyoto Purple Sanga have had a sudden revival of fortunes. After losing all their games in the first half of the season, they have since beaten three leading clubs, Urawa Reds, Verdy Kawasaki and Kashima Antlers.

Hans Ooft will quit as manager of Jubilo Iwata when his three-year term runs out at the end of the season.

MIKE PLASTOW & MICHI ISHIJIMA

Korea

SAMSUNG Blue Wings are favourites to take the second half of the Korean League. They have 27 points, three clear of Yukong Elephants.

The Blue Wings from Suwon and the Elephants from Puchun both have two games to play, but the Atoms have four, and victory in all of them would be likely to win them the title on goal difference.

Atoms, however, may have lost confidence after their surprise 1-0 defeat by lowly Chunbuk Dinos. This followed Bosnian striker Rade's record feat for Pohang: he has become the first player in Korean history to score 10 goals and make 10 assists in a League season.

CHO SHIN

India

THE Indian semi-professional National Premier League kicks off on December 17 with a new formula – a bizarre one indeed – to reduce the travel problems of teams in this huge country of 900 million people.

Twelve teams will play round robin leagues in two groups of six. The top four from each group will join to play an eight-team home and away league, with the bottom four relegated.

The clubs are: Mohan Bagan (Calcutta), East Bengal (Calcutta), Mohammedan Sporting Club (Calcutta), JCT Mills (Phagwara), Churchill Brothers (Goa), Dempo Sports Club (Goa), Salgaocar (Goa), ITI Sports Club (Bangalore), Mahindra & Mahindra (Bombay), Air India (Bombay), Indian Bank (Madras) and Kerala Police (Trivandrum).

BHASI MALAPARAMBA

China

DALIAN seem certain to regain the championship. With three games to go they need only three more points to make sure. The vital match is the second, away to Shanghai, who are six points behind.

Dalian are now unbeaten in 32 League games (13 last season and 19 this time) and have not lost at home since the league started two years ago.

Beijing lost 1-0 to Shandong in a rehearsal for the forthcoming Cup Final.

ZHENG MING

Middle East

GOALS by Abdulrazzaq Ibrahim and Zoehir Bakhit gave the United Arab Emirates a surprise victory over Romania in Bucharest.

The Romanians conceded a goal in the sixth minute and spent almost an hour trying to equalise. Eventually they did so, through Ion Vladoiu, but then Gheorghe Hagi missed a penalty, and almost at once UAE went in front again – this time for good.

In Saudi Arabia, national coach Jose Ze Maria has come under heavy criticism after recent results. A flattering 2-1 win over Zambia in Riyadh was followed by a 3-1 defeat against the same opponents in Dammam, and a 3-0 victory against New Zealand did little to boost confidence as they prepare to defend the forthcoming Gulf Cup in Oman.

The Omanis are in bigger trouble, having lost their last four matches. Egyptian coach Mahmoud Al-Gohary has a lot to do if they are to progress.

Iraq's new coach, Yahya Alwan, surprisingly omitted veteran striker Ahmed Rahdi from the party to go to a training camp in Romania before heading to the Gulf Cup.

Syria, now coached by Youri Kornin from Belarus, continued their consistent form since qualifying for the Asian Cup finals by beating Sudan 1-0 and Bahrein 2-1.

The season in Lebanon began with the Super Cup, in which Al Ansar beat Al Nijmeh 2-0.

MOHAMED CHBARO

Oceania

WAITAKERE CITY maintained their dominance in New Zealand by defeating Mount Wellington 3-1 in the Chatham Cup Final.

The Oceania section of the 1998 World Cup qualifying series began with a tournament featuring Melanesian neighbours Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands.

After the first two games had ended 1-1, everything depended on the Papua New Guinea v Vanuatu clash. With a couple of minutes remaining the Vanuatuans led 1-0, only for the hosts to score twice; they now play New Zealand and Fiji in the next stage.

Fiji began preparations for those World Cup encounters with a 5-1 victory over New Caledonia.

A 3-0 victory over Nadroga in their final game enabled Suva to win their first national Fiji League title.

A compromise has been reached between Soccer Australia and the clubs they threatened to expel from the National League if they did not change badges that reflected their members' ethnic backgrounds.

Clubs will now retain traditional colours within their logos, but in different forms. Melbourne Knights, for instance, will have red and white diamonds in their logo. However, they can be mistaken for the red and white checks of Croatia's national flag.

PAUL MOON

Crossword

WIN a football signed by Frank Worthington

The good people at Uhlsport, Europe's leading specialist sportswear company , have kindly donated a football autographed by 1970s star Frank Worthington. The first correct entry selected at random by Dec 1 wins. Five runners-up will each receive a WORLD SOCCER sweatshirt SEND YOUR ENTRY TO: WORLD SOCCER, KINGS'S REACH TOWER, STAMFORD ST, LONDON SE1

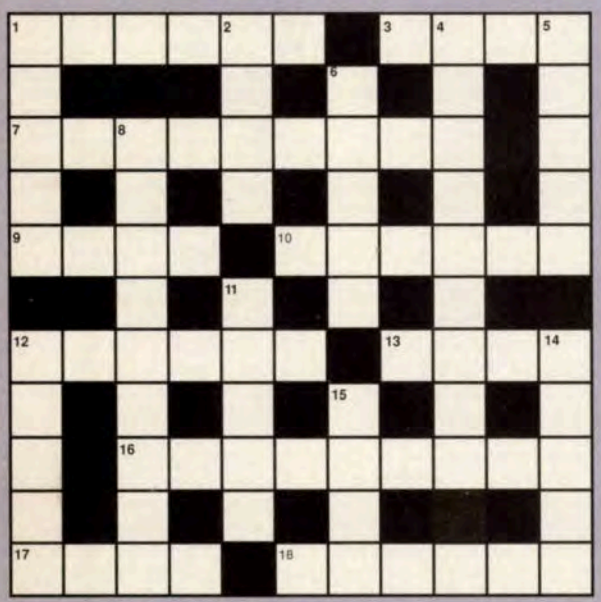
CLUES ACROSS

1 .....Former Italy striker recruited by Chelsea from Juventus (6)
3 .....One-time French international 'keeper back at PSG as coach (4)
7 .....Champion club of Norway (9)
9 .....Milan defender loaned to Padova in 1996 (4)
10 .....Copenhagen's ex-Lyngby, Pisa and Aston Villa midfielder (6)
12 .....Italy's national coach (6)
13 .....South African defender currently with Lazio (4)
16 .....Argentinian midfield man with Montpellier (9)
17 .....Municipal du Ra stadium club from the French First Division (4)
18 .....France's former Bordeaux midfielder who joined Juventus this summer (6)

CLUES DOWN

1 .....Sampdoria's new Argentine striker bought from Boca Juniors (5)
2 .....French club from which Laigle joined Sampdoria (4)
4 .....South African striker playing in Austria with Linzer (9)
5 .....Young Argentinian defender who joined Juventus in 1995 (5)
6 .....El Condor, Chilean goalkeeper banned for feigning injury in 1989 (5)
8 .....Yugoslav whose goal helped win the 1994 Champions Cup for Milan (9)
11 .....South American country best represented by Colo Colo (5)
12 .....Scotland manager who died in office in 1985 (5)
14 .....Norwegian utility player longtime in England on Oldham's books (5)
15 .....Portugal forward who moved from Sporting Lisbon to Ajax in summer (4)

NOVEMBER SOLUTION
ACROSS: 1. Clemence 6. Neal 7. Zebras 9. Taiwan 10. Mecla 11. Barry 14. Oviedo 16. Davids 17. Egli 18. Smolarek
DOWN: 2 Lierse 3. Nesta 4. Engibarov 5. Rada 8. Real Betis 12. Riedle 13. Kodro 15. Vega
NOVEMBER WINNERS
1st Prize Uhlsport football signed by Frank Worthington – Phil Brown, Ilford, Essex.
5 runners-up who receive *WORLD SOCCER* sweatshirt: Andrew Peden, N. Yorkshire; Giancarlo Bol, Sardinia, Italy; G Th. Sigurdarson, Reykjavik, Iceland; Lau Lap Ngai, Hong Kong; Eduardo Sanchez, Madrid, Spain.



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AFRICA

Stars on the rise

NIGERIA's Shooting Stars clinched a berth in this year's African Champions Cup Final as they aim to strike from the records an unlikely losing streak.

It has been one of the great mysteries of African football why Nigeria, arguably the footballing superpower on the continent, have never produced a winner in Africa's premier club competition.

Stars' 2-1 aggregate win over JS Kabylie, the Algerian club who won the African Cup-winners Cup in 1995, puts them into the final and sets up an opportunity to put an end to the anomaly.

The Ibadan-based team, coached now by Shaibu Amidu, who is also in charge of Nigeria's national team, upset holders Orlando Pirates of South Africa in the quarter-final before edging out the Algerians in the final four.

They now play Zamalek, of Cairo, with the Egyptians seeking to set a milestone of their own. Zamalek are chasing a record fourth win in the competition and face Stars in the final for the second time.

They beat the Nigerians 2-0 on aggregate 12 years ago and will again start as favourites after their progress through tough quarter and semi-final ties. Zamalek, who also have an enviable record in penalty shoot-outs, beat COD Meknes of Morocco in the last eight before defeating Sfaxien in a shoot-out after a 1-1 draw in their semi.

Egyptian compatriots Arab Contractors will play in the Cup-winners Cup final against outsiders Sodigraf of Zaire while Tunisia's Etoile du Sahel defend their Confederation of African Football (CAF) Cup title against Kawkab Marrakech of Morocco in an all-Arab affair. Contractors faced Canon Yaounde in their semi-final while Sodigraf were surprise winners over CR Belouzidad of Algeria. The unfashionable Zairian club won 2-1 on aggregate, with the second goal coming from striker Mbuilua Tondelwa, who has now scored nine times in this year's competition.

Etoile du Sahel netted eight goals in their last four matches to reach the CAF Cup final, while opponents Kawkab Marrakesh went on a scoring spree of their own in hammering Kenya Breweries 4-2 on aggregate in their semi-final encounter. Etoile du Sahel, coached by Brazilian Paulo Ruhim, are seeking to become the first team to win successive CAF Cup titles.

MARK GLEESON

Zimbabwe turn to Bruce

Keeper takes over as national boss

THE qualifying campaign for the 1998 Nations Cup kicked off with some eventful journeys, in particular for George Weah and Liberia (see Libero, pages 8 and 9).

Away travel proved a lot more comfortable, and lucrative, for several of the other qualification contenders, notably Zimbabwe. Coached by former Liverpool and Southampton keeper Bruce Grobbelaar, who is currently in charge in an acting capacity but in contention for the job on a full-time basis, Zimbabwe travelled to Sudan and recorded a handsome 3-0 win to go top of their group.

Defender Charles Yohane, who plays his club football in South Africa, scored the first goal and Swiss-based Agent Sawu added two more for Zimbabwe to wrap the game up five minutes into the second half.

Senegal secured victory away in Ethiopia, who have not won in their last six qualifying matches. The home team went ahead inside the first five minutes through the prolific Elias Juhar but Senegal bounced back to score twice through Ibrahim Diandye and Alassane Keita before the interval and then held on for a 2-1 win in what is proving to be a difficult group.

Guinea scored twice in the last five minutes to beat the Central African Republic 3-2 away in Bangui in Group Four, with teenager Momo Wandel Soumah getting the last-minute winner. The match was the first in almost six years for the Central Africans, who have not entered any competition for almost a decade.

Malawi also won on the road, but it was a last-minute own goal that gave them a 2-1 win in Mauritius, with France Jonas the unlucky perpetrator of his country's defeat.

Kenya full-back Francis Oduor also scored an own goal to give Namibia a 1-0 win in Windhoek in their Group Five match and keep the inexperienced southern African nation's proud record of eight unbeaten matches. Namibia only joined the world footballing fraternity six years ago and have played

Henri Michel . . . Morocco coach

Al Ahly finish on top

EGYPT'S most popular club, Al Ahly, returned to winning ways with success in the highly-competitive Arab Champions Cup.

Al Ahly, who have probably the biggest following in Africa, beat Raja Casablanca of Morocco 3-1 in the final, staged at Cairo's National stadium.

The annual competition involves the champion clubs from countries in the Middle East and North Africa, and generates almost as much enthusiasm in Egypt as for the various African club competitions.

The home team got off to a perfect start in the final when veteran international Magdi Tolba, who played at the World Cup finals in Italy in 1990, curled a corner into the net in the second minute.

Raja took 25 minutes to equalise, through Salaheddine Bassir, the new Moroccan sensation. He is on the move to Saudi Arabia, on the strength of his performances in the competition. Bassir scored nine goals in the tournament and was named best player.

Half-time substitute Walid Saleheddine set up the second goal for Al Ahly after being brought down in the penalty area four minutes into the second half. Hady Khashaba converted from the spot.

Saleheddine got the third in the final minute, rounding the goalkeeper to set off frantic celebrations in and around the giant stadium.

National (the English translation of Al Ahly) had edged out Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia, the defending champions, 2-1 in the semi-finals. The Saudis led early on and the match went to extra time, with Ahmed Nakhia scoring the first golden goal in African soccer history.

Raja easily disposed of surprise semi-finalists Shabab Rafash of Palestine, winning 7-0.

The tournament also marked the return to form of veteran goalkeeper Ahmed Shoubier, another player from the World Cup in Italy six years go, whose performances earned him a recall to the Egyptian national squad after more than three years.

MARK GLEESON

New charge . . . Bruce Grobbelaar, a familiar face now in temporary control of Zimbabwe

fewer than 30 internationals. Angola gave notice of their growing stature despite losing 2-1 in Ghana. Benfica striker Paulao got an early goal for the Angolans to sting the Black Stars into action.

Felix Aboagye, who plays for Egyptian giants Al Ahly, and Luton Town striker Kim Grant scored the goals that ensured a narrow win, and three points, for Ghana.

Morocco, who have surprisingly failed to qualify for the last two Nations Cup finals, got a good 1-1 away draw against arch foes Egypt, with veteran Hossam Hassan returning to the Egyptian team to get the equaliser just two minutes from time.

The Moroccans are now coached by Henri Michel, the former French boss who was in charge of Cameroon's dismal World Cup campaign in the USA two years ago, and are promising to return to the top perch in African football.

Algeria, too, have shown signs of recovery with a 4-1 thumping of Ivory Coast in Group Two, just months after the pain of their surprise World Cup elimination by Kenya in June. Two goals by Ali Messabih, the striker described as the new Rabah Madjer, and another two from Auxerre's Moussa Saib, ensured a victory for the North African country.

MARK GLEESON

Round Up

Central Africa

GOALKEEPER Joseph-Antoine Bell ***(above)***, who played for Cameroon in three World Cup finals, is running for the presidency of their Football Federation. Bell, 41, retired two years ago after a long and successful career in France.

Belgian Louis Depireux has been appointed coach of the Indomitable Lions. The 52-year-old last held a coaching position in Switzerland, with Bellinzona. Another Belgian, Serge Heylens, has taken charge of Zaire. He is a former Anderlecht and Belgian international.

Unisport Bafang are the Cameroon champions despite losing their last match 1-0 to Union Douala. They finished 11 points ahead of Cotonsport, with defending champions Racing Bafoussam sixth.

East Africa

MAURITIUS have appointed Ashok Chundunsing to replace Sarjoo Gowreesunkur as coach for the African Nations qualifying campaign. Frenchman Philippe Goubet is technical director.

Uganda Electricity Board beat Kenya's Rivatex to reach the final of the East African Super Cup against Young Africans of Tanzania in Mwanza.

Express lead the Ugandan Super League table by 10 points from SC Villa, who have played one game fewer. Kampala City Council, who have four games in hand, have an outside chance of catching the leaders.

Holders Express have reached the semi-final of the Kakungulu Cup with a 2-0 win over Mbale Heroes.

Sudan's dismal result in the opening match of the Nations Cup qualifiers against Zimbabwe has led to the dismissal of coach Mohamed Abdallah. Sudan are to host this year's East and Central African Senior Challenge Cup.

North Africa

IN TUNISIA Belgian trainer Jean Thissen has left eighth-placed Stade Tunisien after a contract dispute. He has been replaced by Polish coach Stefan Biaias. Gigo Maifredi, the Italian coach of Esperance, has left for family reasons. Caretaker coach Hamza Fouda, who helped Algeria to a 4-1 win over Ivory Coast in their first 1998 Nations Cup qualifier, has turned down a chance to take the job full-time, preferring to return to his role as coach of the Under-20 team.

Fouda turned to several players playing in France to avoid suffering the same fate as his predecessor, Ali Fergani, who was banned for life from coaching in Algeria after the World Cup loss to Kenya in June. Those called up included Moussa Saib, Abdelhafid Tasfaout (Auxerre), Kader Ferhaoui (Montpellier), Youssef Salimi (Nice), Salem Harcheche (Martigues) and Abdel Bouttoba (Cannes).

Last year's African Cup-winners-Cup victors, JB Kabylie, have sold international striker Djamel Menad to new champions Mouloudia Algiers, replacing him with another international Hakim Madane, who returns after five years in Portugal with Familicao and Salgueiros.

Egypt's new national team coach is Farouq Gafaar, who takes over from Dutchman Ruud Krol.

Zamalek head the table with a 100 per cent record after six games. Ismailia are second. El Jadida are the early leaders in the Moroccan championship.

Southern Africa

ZAMBIAN international defender Aggrey Chiyangi has taken over as player-manager of copperbelt club Power Dynamos.

The burial site of the Zambian national team players who died in an air crash in April 1993 is to be a national monument. A total of 18 players, plus officials, crew members and a journalist were killed when their plane exploded over Gabon en route to a World Cup tie in Senegal. All are buried just outside the gates of Lusaka's Independence Stadium.

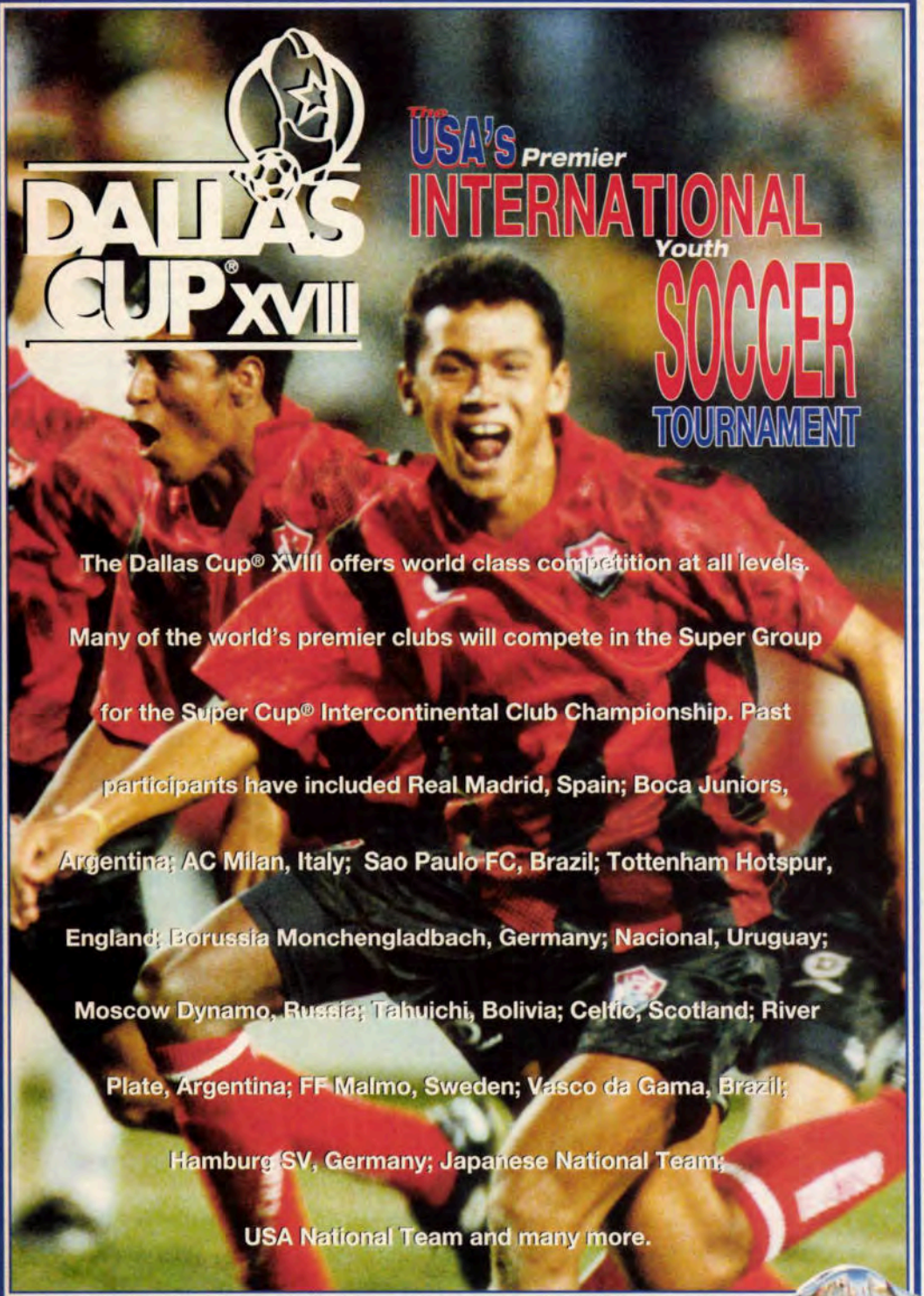
Zamsure lead the Super League table with a two-point advantage over defending champions Mufulira Wanderers.

Several players from South African Premier League club Witbank Aces went on strike over unpaid wages ahead of their match with table-toppers Kaizer Chiefs. A team of 10, including two goalkeepers, lost 7-2 to Chiefs, who lead the table with a 100 per cent record after five matches.

Umtata Bucks and QwaQwa Stars will contest the Coca-Cola Cup final. Bucks beat Pretoria City 3-2 in one semi-final, Stars defeating Mamelodi Sundowns 1-0 in the other.

The trial has begun in Johannesburg of three men accused of killing former Kaizer Chiefs player Elkim 'Pro' Khumalo, father of South African international and MLS player Doctor Khumalo.

MARK GLEESON



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AGE GROUPS

Super Group:	Boys born August 1, 1977 & later
Group A:	Boys born August 1, 1977 & later
Group B:	Boys born August 1, 1979 & later
Group C:	Boys born August 1, 1980 & later
Group D:	Boys born August 1, 1982 & later
Group E:	Boys born August 1, 1984 & later

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Diary OCTOBER 1996

TUESDAY, OCT 1

ARGENTINA: A toxicologist's report into Diego Maradona's precarious state of health - written last year - is leaked. It suggests he is at risk of "death at any imminent time".
BULGARIA: Hristo Stoichkov is left out of the squad for the Luxembourg tie.
CZECH REP: Dusan Uhrin recalls defender Miroslav Kadlec for the tie against Spain.
ENGLAND: Arsene Wenger arrives for his first official day's work at Arsenal.
FRANCE: France midfielder Bruno N'Gotty, who tore a right calf muscle during PSG's 3-0 victory over Vaduz in the Cup-winners Cup, will be out of action for up to a month.
GERMANY: Leverkusen striker Ulf Kirsten, second top scorer in the Bundesliga with seven goals, is suspended by the DFB for three matches after having been sent off against Freiburg for a heavy tackle on Dieter Frey . . . Franz Beckenbauer is reported to have "read the riot act" to Bayern Munich players after flops against Valencia in the UEFA Cup and Werder Bremen in the league.
HOLLAND: Johan Neeskens, who now lives in Switzerland, is appointed assistant coach to the national team . . . Schalke striker Youri Mulder pulls out of the Dutch squad for Saturday's World Cup qualifying match against Wales because of an ankle injury.
ITALY: Milan midfielder Demetrio Albertini is ruled out of Italy's squad for the World Cup tie in Moldova on Saturday by injury – and can thus go on honeymoon instead . . . Fiorentina are reported to have decided on Atletico Madrid midfielders Diego Simeone and Radek Bejbl as top transfer targets . . . pressure is reported to be mounting on Inter coach Roy Hodgson . . . Serie A representatives agree to allocate £30million to third division clubs in return for their support of Luciano Nizzola as new FIGC president ... Fabrizio Ravanelli, training with the national team, raises controversy in England with his comments on speculation linking him with a transfer to Manchester United.
NORWAY: Viking Stavanger sell forward Egil Ostenstadt to Southampton.
SPAIN: Linesman Rafael Guerrero, at the centre of controversy after an expulsion incident in Barcelona's 5-3 win over Zaragoza on Sunday, reports having received death threats . . . La Coruna are reported close to signing Brazil's Reinaldo as attacking partner for Rivaldo as 'Brazil-mania' sweeps the league.
SWEDEN: Right-back Gary Sundgren, who broke his cheekbone on Monday, is omitted from Sweden's squad against Austria.
SWITZERLAND: FIFA warn Zimbabwe and Tanzania they could face suspension for defying a ban on the so-called Castle Cup.

WEDNESDAY, OCT 2

ARGENTINA: Boca Juniors coach Carlos Bilardo refuses to release defenders Fernando Caceres and Nestor Fabbri for training with the national squad because he wants them to concentrate on the South American Supercup game with Racing.
BRAZIL: More than 100 Fluminense fans vandalise the restaurant and boardroom at the Laranjeiras stadium after an aggregate defeat by Guarani in the Conmebol Cup.
ENGLAND: Eric Cantona says he intends to end his playing career in England . . . Leeds recall Tomas Brolin from his loan to FC Zurich . . . Norway striker Jan-Age Fjortoft complains he had played only once this season for Middlesbrough . . . Southampton manager Graeme Souness bids £1m for Brann striker Thor-Andre Flo.
GERMANY: A memorabilia collection tracing the origins of soccer back 3,000 years to China is unveiled, under FIFA auspieces, at the Frankfurt book fair.
ITALY: Juventus defender Ciro Ferrara, for seven seasons a team-mate of Diego Maradona at Napoli, says he and the other players could probably have done more to help Maradona beat cocaine addiction . . . Fiorentina deny having made an illegal appoach for Everton's Andrei Kanchelskis.
SCOTLAND: Injured Colin Hendry, Gordon Durie and Ally McCoist are ruled out of the World Cup qualifiers against Latvia and Estonia.
SPAIN: Rayo Vallecano abandon plans to sign Diego Maradona but buy midfielder Fabrice Moreau from French second division club Toulon . . . ex-Barcelona coach Johan Cruyff says he is unimpressed by the work so far of successor Bobby Robson . . . Zaragoza say they want to replay the last 20 minutes of Sunday's defeat by Barcelona because of the ongoing penalty controversy.
SWITZERLAND: UEFA announces plans to expand the European Under-21 championship final round from four to eight teams; it also opposes the plan of English club Wimbledon to move to Dublin.
TUNISIA: Gigi Maifredi, former Juventus coach, quits after two months as boss of Esperance.

THURSDAY, OCT 3

COLOMBIA: Faustino Asprilla, back home from England for World Cup action, says he is unhappy at a lack of first-team football with Newcastle.
ENGLAND: Chelsea striker Gianluca Vialli is revealed to be having problems finding somewhere to live . . . Wales and Nottingham Forest striker Dean Saunders says one of the reasons he cut short his spell with Galatasaray was the way the pollution in Istanbul exacerbated his five-year-old daughter's asthma.
FRANCE: Manuel Amoros, France's most capped player with 82 appearances to his credit, is forced to retire at 34 because of acute arthritis . . . Enzo Scifo is ruled out of Belgium's World Cup tie against San Marino after breaking a toe in Monaco's 2-0 defeat by Auxerre . . . France coach Aime Jacquet picks uncapped Franck Gava of Lyon and recalls Mickael Madar for the friendly against Turkey because of injuries to Nicolas Ouedec, Florian Maurice and Christophe Dugarry.
GERMANY: The third round cup draw matches Bayern against Werder Bremen.
ITALY: Coaches Sven-Goran Eriksson of Sampdoria and Giovanni Galeone of Perugia are suddenly at risk after cup defeats by lower-division Genoa and third division Norecina . . . South African defender Mark Fish complains that he has played in only two competitive matches for Lazio.
NIGERIA: Olympic champions Nigeria reject a proposed friendly against Brazil – whom they beat in the Games semi-finals.
SPAIN: Bobby Robson says he is concerned that Barcelona rely too heavily on Ronaldo . . . angry Atletico Madrid fans daubed the Vicente Calderon stadium with grafitti complaining about newly-inflated ticket prices.
SWITZERLAND: Tomas Brolin appears poised to defy a call from Leeds to return immediately from his loan to FC Zurich.
TURKEY: UEFA's executive formally approves the expansion of the Champions League group stages next season from 16 to 24 clubs. The top eight nations in UEFA's coefficient ranking will have the right to compete with both champions and runners-up. UEFA report that Germany have declined to play in a tournament in December 1997 between the continental champions from Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa.

Unsettled . . . Newcastle's Faustino Asprilla

FRIDAY, OCT 4

ACTION: In the European Under-21 Championship, Estonia and Belarus draw 1-1, Ukraine beat Portugal 1-0 and Wales lose 2-0 to Holland.
COLOMBIA: Newcastle's Faustino Asprilla says that perhaps he was a little careless in his choice of words the previous day and really he is very happy at St James' Park.
ENGLAND: David Ginola assures Newcastle fans he wants to stay – at least until the end of the season . . . Milan's George Weah, unable to attend a Commonwealth awards ceremony in London, sends a message saying he hopes his English fans "will be seeing a lot more of me in the not too distant future" . . . Dennis Bergkamp reveals that his international career is at risk because of his fear of flying . . . Tottenham manager Gerry Francis considers a £3m bid for France midfielder Emmanuel Petit . . . Chris Vincent, main prosecution witness in the pending match-fixing trial, is remanded in custody on a charge of attempting to pervert the course of justice.
FRANCE: Former Bordeaux president Claude Bez, imprisoned in August for fraud, wins an appeal on grounds of poor health. . . . *L'Equipe*, which created the original European Champions Club Cup in 1955, gives a cautious welcome to the expansion of the Champions League.
GERMANY: Bayern Munich wing-back Christian Ziege says he has been the subject of transfer inquiries from Barcelona, Juventus and Arsenal . . . Schalke dismiss coach Jorg Berger after Tuesday's shock 3-2 cup defeat by Bochum . . . Hamburg midfielder Jens Dowe may move to Wolves on loan.
SPAIN: Valencia coach Luis Aragones receives a vote of confidence from president Paco Roig.
SWITZERLAND: UEFA fines Ferencvaros £50,000 for hooligan trouble at the UEFA Cup-tie against Olympiakos in Budapest; Vitoria Guimaraes of Portugal are fined £13,000 for trouble at their tie against Parma which included "unsportmanslike behaviour" by their ball boys . . . Zurich decide Tomas Brolin should stay on loan from Leeds for another month because he is not yet fit enough to return to England.

SATURDAY, OCT 5

ACTION: Italy open their World Cup campaign with a 3-1 win in Moldova . . . in France, Nantes thrash Nice 7-0 . . . goals from Zickler and Nerlinger bring Bayern Munich a 2-1 home win over old rivals Hamburg but Stuttgart's 4-2 win over Freiburg on Friday keeps them top.
ENGLAND: Man United's £7m striker Andy Cole breaks both legs in a reserve match.
GERMANY: Goalkeeper Oliver Kahn adds to the air of crisis at Bayern Munich by criticising the club for buying too many stars.
ITALY: Veteran midfielder Roberto Donadoni is reported to have decided to return to Milan.
UNITED STATES: The start of the MLS semi-finals is delayed for a week because three of the four teams – Tampa Bay, DC United and Los Angeles – have players involved in World Cup qualifying ties.

SUNDAY, OCT 6

ACTION: Yugoslavia are top scorers on another day of World Cup play, winning 8-1 away to the Faroe Islands . . . Edmundo scores a hat-trick against his old team as Vasco da Gama thrash Flamengo 4-1.
BELGIUM: Wilfried Van Moer again ignores Philippe Albert when he names his squad for the World Cup qualifier against San Marino.
ITALY: The media lambasts Arrigo Sacchi folllowing the World Cup win over Moldova.
SUDAN: The State Minister for Social Planning, Brig. Gen. Yousif Abdul-Fattah, dismissed the officials, coaches and players of the national team following a 3-0 home defeat by Zimbabwe in the Nations Cup.

MONDAY, OCT 7

ENGLAND: Manchester United launch their own brand of beer.
FRANCE: Panama's Julio Cesar Dely Valdes says he is likely to stay with league leaders Paris Saint-Germain until 1998, denying rumours of a possible transfer or loan to Brazilian club Corinthians . . . Eric Cantona and Diego Maradona, co-founders of the International Asociation of Professional Footballers, miss the union's first annual meeting in Paris where it is decided to stage a benefit match for Jean-Marc Bosman.
ITALY: Italy captain Paolo Maldini extends his contract with Milan by one year to 2001 . . . Lazio president Dino Zoff escapes unhurt after his car is wrecked in a motorway crash.
SWITZERLAND: UEFA clarifies that a country may have three clubs in the Champions League next season if the winners of this season's event come from one of Europe's top eight nations and also finish outside the top two this season in their domestic championship . . . Tomas Brolin is the subject of yet another 'come-home' order from Leeds.
TURKEY: Galatasaray accept an offer of £1.5m from Southampton for Ulrich Van Gobbel.

OBITUARIES

SILVIO PIOLA . . . Italy's 1938 World Cup-winning centre-forward, dies aged 83. See Libero, pages 8 and 9.
MATTHEW HARDING . . . Vice-Chairman of Chelsea and its major financial backer, dies aged 42 in a helicopter crash while returning fom Chelsea's League Cup defeat at Bolton.

Diary OCTOBER 1996

TUESDAY, OCT 8

ACTION: Bosnia lose 4-1 to Croatia in the World Cup qualifiers, played in Bologna, Italy; Luxembourg lose 2-1 at home to Bulgaria . . . England draw 0-0 with Poland at Molineux, Wolverhampton, in an Under-21 tie which does not start until 10pm because of a bomb alert.
ENGLAND: Gianluca Vialli suggests that this year's European Footballer of the Year award should go to Nwankwo Kanu, whose career is threatened by a heart condition . . . profits of Manchester United plc fell over the last financial year from £20m to £15.4m.
GERMANY: National coach Berti Vogts and Bayern president Franz Beckenbauer both call for the winter break to be scrapped . . . Adidas says it has secured the rights to be an official sponsor of the 1998 World Cup.
ITALY: The federation sets December 14 as the date on which its new president – expected to be Luciano Nizzola – is elected.
PANAMA: Cesar Maturana is sacked as national coach following the 1-1 draw with El Salvador.
SPAIN: Real Madrid's teenage striker Raul Gonzalez insures his legs for £10million . . .

Insurance cos. Raul of Real Madr

the championship is plunged into further fixture chaos by television demands which mean that Atletico Madrid may yet have to face Betis on Friday . . . Deportivo La Coruna's Riazor stadium is shut for one match after the referee was hit in the face by a coin thrown from the stands in the game with Rayo Vallecano.
SWITZERLAND: Tomas Brolin tells FC Zurich he intends to fly back to Leeds for a meeting with manager George Graham.

WEDNESDAY, OCT 9

ACTION: Extraordinary confusion in Tallinn where Estonia fail to show up for their World Cup tie against Scotland . . . England open Glenn Hoddle's home managerial reign with an unconvincing 2-1 win over Poland.
ARGENTINA: A judge orders the arrest of Diego Maradona's manager, Guillermo Coppola, on charges of possessing drugs with intent to sell.
BRAZIL: Cruzeiro lose the leadership of the national championship after a 2-0 defeat by struggling Parana. Four players are sent off.
ENGLAND: Southampton are granted a work permit for Israeli international midfielder Eyal Berkowitz from Maccabi Haifa . . . Sheffield Wednesday agree transfer terms for Internazionale midfielder Benito Carbone.
GERMANY: Schalke, who sacked Jorg Berger last week after a players' revolt, appoint Dutchman Huub Stevens.
NORWAY: Aarhus sell striker Havard Flo to Werder Bremen who, in turn, loan Argentinian midfielder Rodolfo Cardoso to Hamburg.

THURSDAY, OCT 10

ACTION: Canada beat Cuba in a World Cup CONCACAF qualifier.
ESTONIA: Federation secretary Ainar Lettonon estimates the cost of the Match That Never Was against Scotland at £170,000.
FRANCE: National coach Aime Jacquet worries that club commitments abroad may upset his plans for the 1998 World Cup finals.
GERMANY: Duisburg president Dieter Fischdick dies aged 58 after suffering a heart attack at a news conference . . . Thomas Hassler is hailed as a hero in the wake of Germany's 5-1 World Cup win in Armenia.
HOLLAND: Coach Louis Van Gaal says he will quit at the end of the season. He says: "My ambitions lie abroad. I would like to go to a club comparable to Ajax" . . . Ajax captain Danny Blind is to undergo a groin operation which will keep him out until the New Year.
ITALY: Luciano Nizzola, Italian league president and probable next federation president, tries to deflect questions about whether he will sack national coach Arrigo Sacchi . . . Juventus midfielder Antonio Conte could be out for up to six months after injuring his knee in Italy's 1-0 Cup over Georgia.
JAPAN: Brazilians Antonio and Bismarck each score as the J.League Imports XI beat a national team 2-1 in the all-star match.
PANAMA: Orlando Munoz is appointed national coach in succession to Cesar Maturana.
SCOTLAND: The SFA says it will abide by whatever decision FIFA takes on the World Cup qualifier that never was in Estonia.
SPAIN: Brazilian striker Romario tells Valencia coach Luis Aragones that he overslept after arriving an hour and a quarter late for training . . . Deportivo La Coruna say they will pursue legal action to force a replay of the final games of the 1993-94 championship, which they lost on goal difference to Barcelona.
UKRAINE: Valeri Lobanovski will return from the Middle East to take over as coach to his old club Dynamo Kiev from January 1.

FRIDAY, OCT 11

ENGLAND: Euro 96 is revealed to have made a record profit of £69million . . . Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan is furious when Faustino Asprilla misses his scheduled flight back to England from Colombia . . . Benito Carbone signed a four-year deal with Sheffield Wednesday after his £2.5m transfer from Inter – and criticises coach Roy Hodgson.
HOLLAND: Ajax winger Peter Hoekstra agrees to a knee operation that will keep him out for most of the rest of the season . . . Johan Cruyff is the early favourite to take over at Ajax next season from Louis Van Gaal.
ITALY: Roberto Baggio is handed a Milan recall when illness rules Marco Simone out of the weekend league match away to Roma.
SLOVAKIA: Slovan Bratislava striker Robert Tomaschek starts a week's trial with Everton.
SPAIN: Brazilian striker Romario is dropped by Valencia coach Luis Aragones.
UKRAINE: Valeri Lobanovski, reappointed as coach to Kiev Dynamo, says he intends to develop teamwork rather than groom superstar individuals.
UNITED STATES: The US national team still intend to play in Peru next week despite drawn-out negotiations with various players.

SATURDAY, OCT 12

ACTION: Alan Shearer's goal lifts Newcastle to a 1-0 victory at Derby and leadership of England's Premier League . . . Bayern Munich win 4-2 at Cologne to go joint top in Germany after Stuttgart draw 2-2 with Hansa Rostock . . . Dutch leaders Feyenoord are held 1-1 by RKC but stay two points clear of PSV . . . England midfielder Paul Ince is sent off but Inter still beat Piacenza 2-0 to go top in Italy . . . a single goal by Brazilian winger Edmilson Pimenta gives Porto victory over Sporting in Portugal . . . top scorer Oleg Veretennikov's 40th-minute goal brings Rotor Volgograd a 1-0 win over Baltika Kaliningrad and keeps them one point ahead of Moscow Spartak . . . Hibernian inflict Rangers' first league defeat of the season by 2-1 . . . Barcelona went back to the top in Spain with a 5-1 win at Compostela thanks to two more superb goals from Ronaldo . . . Washington beat Tampa Bay 2-1 to reach the MLS Cup showdown.
ENGLAND: Australian goalkeeper Mark Bosnich calls a radio phone-in programme to apologise for a "joke" which misfired when he gave a Nazi salute to Tottenham suppporters.
FRANCE: Angry Bastia fans pelt a referee with missiles after he fails to punish a tackle by Monaco's Emmanuel Petit which breaks the ankle of Slovak striker Lubomir Moravcik; Marseille fans have to be dispersed by tear gas after a 1-0 home defeat by Caen.
ITALY: Juventus president Umberto Agnelli says he hopes to secure Marcello Lippi's agreement to a coaching contract extension after Wednesday's Champions League game against Rapid Vienna . . . Lazio's Argentina defender Jose Chamot is ruled out for two months after tearing ligaments in his right elbow and dislocating his shoulder.
SWEDEN: IFK Gothenburg retain the championship after winning 6-0 away to Trelleborgs.

SUNDAY, OCT 13

ACTION: Japan beat Tunisia 1-0 in a friendly in Kobe . . . Tunisia's Club Sfaxien beat Zamalek of Egypt 1-0 in an African Champions Cup semi-final first leg . . . Juventus lose their first league game of the season in Italy, 2-1 to Vicenza . . . Benfica win 1-0 at Salgueiros.
ENGLAND: Ryan Giggs signs a new five-year contract with Manchester United.
MALAYSIA: Uzbek striker Alexander Kozukhov, of Trengganu, dies after apparently falling from the balcony of his 13th-floor apartment in Kuala Lumpur.
THAILAND: Sweden forward Tomas Brolin is reported to have arrived in Bangkok after last week's stormy meeting with Leeds.

MONDAY, OCT 14

ITALY: Bologna extend the contract of coach Renzo Uliveiri by two years to June, 1999 . . . Paul Ince accuses Piacenza striker Giampietro Piovani of feigning the fall which had Inter's England midfielder sent off.
SPAIN: Valencia and struggling Brazilian club Flamengo open negotiations over the possible transfer home to Rio of Romario . . . the media goes to town on Ronaldo's latest two-goal display for Barcelona.
THAILAND: Sweden's Tomas Brolin, on holiday in Bangkok, continues to insist that he will not return to Leeds.

TUESDAY, OCT 15

ACTION: Monaco score a shock 4-2 away win over Monchengladbach in the UEFA Cup
ALBANIA: Neptun Bajko resigns as national coach after last week's 3-0 defeat by Portugal.
AUSTRALIA: Peter Velappan, secretary of the Asian confederation, says the top clubs of Asia, Oceania and the USA could compete in a new club championship from 1997.
BRAZIL: Romario arrives in Rio from Spain saying he is not happy with Valencia . . . a cousin of Barcelona striker Ronaldo, Rogerio Albuquerque, aged 25, is arrested in Rio for falsifying a postal money order for £2,300.
ITALY: Perugua coach Giovanni Galeone is admitted to hospital with a heart problem . . . Sweden striker Martin Dahlin says he wants to leave Roma to gain first-team football.
SPAIN: Barcelona turned down a £20m offer from Milan for Ronaldo; Barcelona's reserve goalkeeper Mariano Angoy – son-in-law of Johan Cruyff – joins local American football club Barcelona Dragons as goalkicker.
SWEDEN: A survey reveals that the most any club back in Sweden would want to pay for troubled Tomas Brolin is £500,000.

WEDNESDAY, OCT 16

ACTION: In the Champions League Milan lose again, this time 2-1 at IFK Gothenburg.
ARGENTINA: State President Carlos Menem denies speculation that members of his government were linked to the drug investigation of Diego Maradona's agent Guillermo Coppola.
AUSTRALIA: National coach Eddie Thomson resigns to take over at Japanese club Sanfrecce Hiroshima.
GERMANY: Russia forward Igor Dobrovolsky joins Fortuna Dusseldorf on loan from Dynamo Moscow until June 1997 . . . South African Sean Dundee, the Bundesliga's leading goal scorer, could play for Germany within months if his German citizenship is approved.
GUATEMALA: Disaster in the national Mateo Flores stadium where 81 fans are crushed to death and more than 150 injured before a scheduled World Cup qualifying tie against Costa Rica.
ITALY: Chile international Ivan Zamorano insists he wants to stay at Inter despite criticism of the fact that he has yet to score in a competitive match . . . Nwankwo Kanu will undergo heart surgery in Cleveland, Ohio, to repair a weak aortic valve. A return to playing remains doubtful.
JAPAN: Nagoya Grampus Eight win 2-0 at Jubilo Iwata to go top of the J League.
PORTUGAL: Guimaraes keeper Nuno Santo is set to move to Deportivo La Coruna for £2m.
RUSSIA: Alania Vladikavkaz's hopes of retaining the league title suffer a serious blow when key defender Omari Tetradze is suspended for the final three games of the season for pushing a linesman in Saturday's 2-0 defeat away to CSKA Moscow.
SCOTLAND: Aberdeen assistant manager Tommy Craig says that Scottish sides are not skilful enough to succeed in Europe.
TURKEY: The national television authority postpones one-day shutdowns imposed on two pay-TV channels (for showing a violent film at prime time) because that would prevent *InterStar* and *Show TV* from showing a Cup-winners Cup tie between Galatasaray and Paris Saint-Germain and the Champions League clash between Manchester United and Fenerbahce.
UNITED STATES: Los Angeles Galaxy defender Dan Calichman is ruled out of Sunday's MLS Cup after being shown his third yellow card of the playoffs in Galaxy's 2-1 shoot-out victory over Kansas City Wiz last Sunday.

Under fire . . . Rangers' Paul Gascoigne

THURSDAY, OCT 17

ACTION: Ronaldo scores a hat-trick as Brazil beat Lithuania 3-0 in a friendly . . . in the Cup-winners Cup, Barcelona overcome the absence of Ronaldo and beat Red Star Belgrade 3-1 . . . Flamengo are held 1-1 at home by Colo Colo of Chile in the quarter-final first leg of the South American Supercup.
AUSTRALIA: The search starts for a new national coach in the wake of Eddie Thomson's move to Japan.
ENGLAND: Tottenham chairman Alan Sugar and former England coach Terry Venables claim victory after High Court confirmation of settlement over Sugar's libel action.
GERMANY: Bernd Holzenbein, a member of West Germany's 1974 World Cup-winning side, quits as general manager of Second Division Eintracht Frankfurt . . . Heinz Hoher, new coach of struggling Second Division side VfB Luebeck, suffers a heart attack at his first training session after taking over from Michael Lorkowski.
GUATEMALA: Officials begin to investigate the disastrous stampede at the Mateo Flores stadium. Witnesses claim that the sale of thousands of forged tickets led to overcrowding inside the stadium which was already full two hours before kick-off.
ITALY: Marcello Lippi, coach of European champions Juventus, will be in charge through to June 1999 after signing a two-year extension of his contract . . . Milan owner Silvio Berlusconi tells coach Oscar Washington Tabarez his job is safe despite Wednesday's 2-1 Champions League defeat by IFK Gothenburg.
NIGERIA: Federation officials say Nigeria will select two entirely different teams for their next two international matches to have a closer look at their foreign-based players. Nigeria face Turkey in Istanbul on October 29, 11 days before a World Cup qualifying match against Burkina Faso in Lagos.
SCOTLAND: Paul Gascoigne returns to Glasgow in double trouble after his Champions League expulsion against Ajax and allegations of assault against wife Sheryl.
SOUTH KOREA: Chung Mong-joon, president of the South Korean federation, dismisses reported criticism by FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter of problems in developing a working relationship between the 2002 World Cup hosts.
SPAIN: Zaragoza lose their bid to force a replay of the final 20 minutes of last month's league game in which they lost 5-3 to Barcelona after a controversial penalty decision . . . Atletico Madrid's Serbian coach Radomir Antic rejects an offer to take charge of Yugoslavia's national team.
TURKEY: A fan is reported to have fallen to his death as he tried to adjust a television aerial for a perfect picture of Wednesday's Champions League match between Fenerbahce and Manchester United.

FRIDAY, OCT 18

ACTION: Bahrain draw 1-1 with the UAE and Kuwait beat Oman 2-1 in the Gulf Council Cup in Muscat.
GERMANY: Heinz Hoher, who collapsed with a heart attack at training a few hours after being named as new coach of second division Lubeck, is off the critical list in a local hospital.
ITALY: An amateur (male) player who kissed the woman referee when she sent him off is suspended for two matches – one for the sending-off and one for an "unusually intimate" expression of dissent.
JORDAN: More than 30 fans are injured after supporters of rival teams, Faisali (ethnically Jordanian) and Wahdat (predominantly Palestinian), clash at the Amman International stadium.
ROMANIA: Steaua accuse Galatasaray of Turkey of illegally poaching midfielder Iulian Filipescu last month.
SCOTLAND: Paul Gascoigne is fined two weeks' wages by Rangers – about £20,000 – for his expulsion against Ajax.
SWITZERLAND: FIFA asks that a minute of silence be observed at all matches this weekend in memory of those killed at the World Cup qualifying game in Guatemala City . . . FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter says that Egypt, Morocco and South Africa are all expected to join the bidding for the 2006 World Cup finals . . . FIFA's player's status committee finds in favour of Spanish club Oviedo in their bid to sign Argentina midfielder Juan Jose Borelli from Panathinaikos of Greece.
TURKEY: A young fan, thrilled by Galatasaray's Cup-winners Cup victory over Paris Saint-Germain, is reported by police to have killed his older sister with a celebratory barrage from a family hunting rifle.

SATURDAY, OCT 19

ACTION: Qatar and Saudi Arabia draw 2-2 in the Gulf Council Cup . . . Monaco beat struggling Nice 4-1 at home to move into second place in the French League . . . Russian league leaders Rotor Volgograd drop two key points in a 0-0 draw against struggling Chernomorets Novorossiisk . . . Davor Suker scores a hat-trick to lift Real Madrid to a 6-1 win over Real Sociedad in Spain.
ITALY: Inter's England midfielder Paul Ince has a two-game suspension halved when the league disciplinary commission rules that he reacted to a racial insult by an opponent but did not hit him violently as originally reported by the referee of last Saturday's Inter-Piacenza game . . . Sergio Campana, players union leader, appeals to referees to crack down on rough play and asked players to stop feigning injury.
TURKEY: Nigerian World Cup footballer Daniel Amokachi escapes unhurt when his car hits a tree after a tyre blow-out.

Red card problems Inter's Paul

SUNDAY, OCT 20

ACTION: In Argentina, Uruguayan veteran Enzo Francescoli scores twice as River Plate beat Rosario Central 5-2 . . . Dalian Wanda hold outgoing champions Shanghai Shenhua goalless to win China's professional league title . . . Newcastle thrash Manchester United 5-0 to go top in England . . . Brazilian Luis Antonio scores the goal which clinches the Finnish league title for FC Jazz in a 1-0 win over Jaro . . . a last-minute penalty by Antoine Sibierski earns champions Auxerre a 1-1 draw with leaders Paris Saint-Germain . . . PSV Eindhoven storm back to the top of the Dutch league in style by demolishing previous leader Feyenoord 7-2 . . . Juventus go top in Italy by defeating previously unbeaten Inter 2-0 . . . Barcelona thrash Logrones 8-0 in Spain with Ronaldo scoring twice . . . Spartak Moscow come from 3-1 down to win 4-3 at rivals Torpedo Moscow and go top in Russia with two games to go . . . DC United of Washington hit back from 2-0 down to beat Los Angeles Galaxy 3-2 in overtime in the first MLS Cup championship decider in the United States.
ITALY: Milan's executive vice-president Adriano Galliani denies reports of a bid for Barcelona striker Ronaldo.
KUWAIT: The president of the Kuwaiti federation says the national team will not play Iraq in the Asian Cup even if both teams reach the Final.
SAUDI ARABIA: National team stars Said Al-Owairan, Saleh Al-Dawoud and Fahd Al-Ghashian are sentenced to three months' jail, banned from the national team and suspended for a year from club football after their conviction by an Islamic court for unspecified "immoral acts." Only Al-Owairan and Dawoud served their prison sentences, Al-Ghashian having fled to the United States.
UNITED STATES: Tampa Bay midfielder Carlos Valderrama of Colombia wins the MLS Most Valuable Player award.

MONDAY, OCT 21

FRANCE: Paris Saint-Germain manager Ricardo rejects crisis talk after the 4-2 defeat by Galatasaray in the Cup-winners Cup and 1-1 weekend draw against Auxerre in the league.
GERMANY: Freiburg winger Alain Sutter rejects an offer from new national coach Ralf Fringer to return to Switzerland duty . . . a special DFB sub-committee prepares to consider whether the winter break should be scrapped . . . Germany captain Jurgen Klinsmann insists he is staying at Bayern and has no plans to return to England.
GUATEMALA: A presidential commission studying last week's stadium tragedy in which 81 people were crushed to death says it will report later this week.
ITALY: Cagliari sack Uruguayan coach Gregorio Perez. Roma's Carlos Bianchi is also under pressure . . . relieved Juventus say midfielder Antonio Conte is unlikely to need surgery for a knee injury and could be playing again in six weeks.
RUSSIA: Rotor Volgograd claim they were robbed of a crucial victory by a drunken linesman who ruled out a perfectly good goal in Saturday's goalless draw away to struggling Chernomorets Novorossiisk.
SPAIN: The players' union threatens to strike on December 29 unless their traditional Christmas holiday is reinstated . . . La Coruna sign another Brazilian in striker Renaldo from Atletico Mineiro for £1.8million . . . Bulgarian striker Hristo Stoichkov runs into new controversy after it emerges that he defied Barcelona team-mates and orders from coach Bobby Robson by taking a penalty with the score at 4-0 in Sunday's 8-0 thrashing of Logrones.

TUESDAY, OCT 22

ALBANIA: Astrit Hafizi replaces Neptun Bajko as national coach.
BRAZIL: Flamengo are reported "90 per cent certain" to bring Romario back on loan from Valencia.
ENGLAND: Blackburn dismiss reports of a bid for Flamengo striker Bebeto – and then crash out of the League Cup, losing 1-0 at home to second division Stockport . . . David Ginola, back to form in Newcastle's 5-0 weekend rout of Manchester United, says he thinks he still has plenty to offer the French national team . . . Nottingham Forest sign a new eight-year sponsorship deal with Umbro.
GERMANY: Borussia Dortmund lose a second libero to a thigh injury as Austrian international Wolfgang Feiersinger follows Matthias Sammer on to the treatment table after injuring his thigh against Bayern Munich on Sunday.
ITALY: Former Cagliari coach Carlo Mazzone is reappointed in place of sacked Uruguayan Gregorio Perez . . . the domestic cup-tie between Reggiana and Milan is switched to Cremona while engineers continue checking if the Reggio Emilio stadium was damaged in an earthquake last week . . . an Italian version of the 'Guardian Angels' will start work in December to help control and pacify fans in Milan, Brescia and Bergamo . . . speculation grows that Arrigo Sacchi will be sacked as national coach after next month's friendly against Bosnia-Herzgovina in Sarajevo.
JAPAN: Grampus 8 draw 2-2 with Hong Kong's South China to reach the semi-finals of the Asian Cup-winners Cup.
ROMANIA: Struggling Rapid Bucharest appoints Grigore Sichitiu as general manager for the second time in succession to Ion Padureanu, who quit earlier this month.
RUSSIA: Football Union president Vyacheslav Koloskov says he wants to change the country's domestic season to autumn-spring, bringing it into line with most of Europe.
SOUTH AFRICA: Pressure builds up from politicians to try to stop Karlsruhe's Dean Dundee claiming German citizenship and playing for the European champions' national team.
SPAIN: Logrones striker Manuel Martinez apologises to referee Brito Arceo for "talking to him like a dog" after his team had conceded their eighth goal on Sunday against Barcelona . . . the TV cash controversy plumbs greater depths as federation secretary Jesus Samper resigns in frustration.
TURKEY: Galatasaray request FIFA to authorise Romania midfielder Iulian Filipescu's transfer from Steaua Bucharest despite the Romanian champions' claim that the Turks poached him illegally.
UNITED STATES: US national team players reach contract agreements with the USSF just in time to be registered for the opening World Cup qualifiers.

YORK CITY BEAT EVERTON IN COCA-COLA LEAGUE (

AUSTRIA

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

AUSTRIAN CUP - 1ST RND

BAUMGARTEN 1 GRAZER 5, DONAULINZ 0 SV RIED 1, FIRST VIENNA 3 AUSTRIA WIEN 1, SAALFELDEN 0 SALZBURG 5, ST PETER 1 FC LINZ 3, SCHARDING 0 FC TIROL 11, HARTBERG 0 ADMIRA WACKER 3, VORWARTS 0 LINZER ASK 6, VILLACH 0 STURM GRAZ 2

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

LINZ 0
LINZER ASK 0 Att: 12,000

WEEKEND

LINZ 3 (Madlener 9, 19, Popovic 55)
FC TIROL 0 Att: 3,000

ADMIRA WACKER 1 (Klausz 57)
SALZBURG 1 (Bezek 82) Att: 3,500

RAPID WIEN 4 (Stumpf 24, 60, Wagner 40, Stoger 85)
GRAZER AK 0 Att: 5,000

SV RIED 2 (Oerlemans 63, Drechsel 90)
LINZER ASK 0 Att: 3,500

STURM GRAZ 4 (Purk 4, Giannini 18, Swierczewski 69, Hiden 89)
AUSTRIA WIEN 1 (Brunnmayr 51) Att: 3,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

SALZBURG 1 (Bezek 88)
STURM GRAZ 0 Att:13,000

AUSTRIA WIEN 2 (Brunmayr 24, Leitern 32)
FC LINZ 0 Att: 4,000

GRAZER AK 3 (Ramusch 51, Vukovic 65, Dmitrovic 73)
ADMIRA WACKER 0 Att: 3,000

LINZER ASK 3 (Riseth, Duspara 47, Westerthaler 87)
RAPID WIEN 0 Att: 10,000

FC TIROL 4 (Streiter 45, Krinner 52, Kitzbichler 56, Sliwowski 75)
SV RIED 0 Att: 6,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

GRAZER AK 0
SALZBURG 0 Att: 7,000

FC LINZ 0
STURM GRAZ 3 (Mahlich 38, Posch 70, Reinmayr 90) Att: 4,000

ADMIRA WACKER 1 (Rosenegger 90)
LINZER ASK 2 (Palyatytsya 38, Weisenberger 50) Att: 600

RAPID WIEN 4 (Lesiak 34, Stumpf 45, Kuhbauer 66 pen, 82 pen)
FC TIROL 2 (Mayrleb 42, Streiter 86 pen) Att: 12,000

SV RIED 3 (Stanislavjevic 35, Waldhor 59, Drechsel 74)
AUSTRIA WIEN 2 (Rachimov 18, Brunmayr 47) Att: 3,000

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rapid Vienna	15	8	6	1	30	14	30
SV Salzburg	15	8	5	2	19	8	29
FC Tirol Innsbruck	14	7	4	3	24	15	25
Linzer ASK	15	5	6	4	18	18	21
Sturm Graz	15	5	4	6	20	16	19
Austria Vienna	15	5	3	7	17	27	18
Casino Graz	14	4	5	5	15	18	17
SV Ried	15	5	2	8	21	26	17
Admira Wacker	15	2	6	7	15	25	12
FC Linz	15	2	5	8	8	20	11

BELGIUM

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

GENK 1 (Strupar pen 62)
EENDRACHT AALST 1 (Porte 81) Att: 8,000

LIERSE 1 (Brocken 6)
EXCELSIOR MOESKROEN 0 Att: 7,000

RWDM 1 (Vergueitchik 89)
CHARLEROI 3 (Fiers 29, 44, Javanovic 60) Att: 6,000

ST TRUIDEN 2 (Goots 55, Curto 84)
LOMMEL 4 (Waligora 18, Van Mol 21, Fadiga 58, Hendrickx 80) Att: 8,000

STANDARD LIEGE 3 (Lawaree 7, Thhijs 10, Wamberto 78)
MECHELEN 1 (M'Bonabucya 7) Att: 14,000

ANTWERP v LOKEREN – *postponed*

CLUB BRUGGE 2 (Claessens 19, Nielsen 48)
EKEREN 0 Att: 10,500

GENT 2 (Jbari 54, 82)
CERCLE BRUGES 1 (Renty 42) Att: 5,800

HARELBEKE 0
ANDERLECHT 0 Att: 9,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

ANDERLECHT 0
LIERSE 0 Att: 17,000

ANTWERP 3 (Jbari 61, Kiekens 71, Herreman 79 og)
GENT 1 (Kiekens 68) Att: 5,000

CERCLE BRUGES 1 (Cooreman 45)
HARELBEKE 2 (Declercq 13, Verschelde 68) Att: 4,000

CHARLEROI 3 (Casto 15, 75, Chirilov 85)
CLUB BRUGES 0 Att: 8,000

EENDRACHT AALST 1 (Lauwers pen 75)
STANDARD 2 (Wamberto 19, Thijs 35) Att: 9,000

MOESKROEN 5 (L. Mpenza 50, 77, 83, Dierickx og 63, Molnar og 73)
ST TRUIDEN 0 Att: 6,000

LOKEREN 0
EKEREN 1 (Verstraeten 14) Att: 4,000

LOMMEL 0
GENK 0 Att: 12,000

MECHELEN 0
RWDM 2 (Laeremans 76, Haydock 81) Att: 5,500

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

CLUB BRUGGE 2 (Spehar 21, 71)
MECHELEN 0 Att: 12,000

GENK 0
MOESKROEN 0 Att: 9,000

GENT 1 (Martens 70)
LOKEREN 2 (Linskens 82, Vonasek 86) Att: 8,800

EKEREN 1 (Czerniatynski 8)
CHARLEROI 0 Att: 4,000

LIERSE 4 (Huysman 20, De Roover 27, Rudy 63, De Sousa 67)
CERCLE BRUGES 2 (Torma 10, 45) Att: 5,000

RWDM 2 (Pierre 51, 79)
EENDRACHT AALST 0 Att: 6,000

ST TRUIDEN 4 (Goots 28, 51, Rasmussen 62, Curto 90)
ANDERLECHT 0 Att: 10,000

STANDARD LIEGE 3 (Lawaree 47, 51, Schepens 72)
LOMMEL 1 (Van Geneugden 53) Att: 11,000

HARELBEKE 2 (Verschelde 62, De Tollenaere 77)
ANTWERP 1 (Godfroid 81) Att: 4,500

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

EENDRACHT AALST 1 (Temmerman 54)
CLUB BRUGGE 1 (Claessens 19) Att: 8,000

MOESKROEN 2 (L. Mpenza 27, Verspaille 42)
STANDARD LIEGE 1 (Lawaree 5) Att: 9,000

ANDERLECHT 3 (Walem 74, Zetterberg 79, De Bilde 86 pen)
GENK 1 (Goor 31) Att: 19,000

ANTWERP 0
LIERSE 1 (Van Meir 52) Att: 6,000

CERCLE BRUGES 1 (Shehu 81)
ST TRUIDEN 1 (Goots 71) Att: 4,200

GENT 1 (Jbari 81)
HARELBEKE 4 (Origi 15, 27, 50, De Tollenaere 55 Att: 6,500

LOKEREN 4 (Koller 19, Budka 30, Ekakia 45, 74)
CHARLEROI 2 (Brogno 4, Jovanovic 82) Att: 7,000

LOMMEL 2 (Janssen 69, Waligora 80)
RWDM 0 Att: 5,000

MECHELEN 3 (Mbonabucya 29, Valgaeren 60, Hasenhuttl 85 pen)
EKEREN 0 Att: 5,800

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Standard Liege	13	9	0	4	24	16	27
Club Brugge	13	7	4	2	25	13	25
Moeskroen	13	7	4	2	22	12	25
Anderlecht	13	6	5	2	21	10	23
Harelbeke	13	6	3	4	23	16	21
Lierse	13	5	6	2	19	13	21
Charleroi	12	5	1	5	19	18	19
FC Antwerp	13	5	4	4	13	13	19
RWDM	13	5	4	4	22	23	19
Lommel	12	4	3	4	22	17	18
Lokeren	13	3	2	6	21	20	17
Charleroi	13	4	3	6	21	26	15
Ghent	13	2	6	4	12	17	15
Ekeren	13	2	2	7	17	20	14
Aalst	13	2	6	5	16	24	12
Mechelen	13	0	5	6	15	23	11
St Truiden	13	4	4	7	18	31	10
Cercle Bruges	13	2	4	9	13	31	4

ENGLAND

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

MIDWEEK

WIMBLEDON 3 (Gayle 12, Ekoku 38, 73)
SOUTHAMPTON 1 (Oakley 77) Att: 8,572

COCA-COLA (LEAGUE) CUP - 2ND RND, 2ND LEG

BIRMINGHAM 0 COVENTRY 1
Coventry won 2-1 on agg

BLACKBURN 2 BRENTFORD 0
Agg: 4-4, Blackburn won away goals

CARLISLE 2 PORT VALE 2
Port Vale won 3-2 on agg

CHELSEA 1 BLACKPOOL 3
Chelsea won 5-4 on agg

DARLINGTON 0 LEEDS UTD 2
Leeds won 4-2 on agg

DERBY 2 LUTON 2
Luton won 3-2 on agg

HEREFORD 0 MIDDLESBROUGH 3
Middlesbrough won 10-0 on agg

IPSWICH 4 FULHAM 2
Ipswich won 5-3 on agg

LEICESTER 2 SCARBOROUGH 1
Leicester won 4-1 on agg

MAN CITY 0 LINCOLN 1
Lincoln won 5-1 on agg

OXFORD 1 SHEFFIELD WED 0
Oxford won 2-1 on agg

PETERBORO 1 SOUTHAMPTON 4
Southampton won 6-1 on agg

PORTSMOUTH 1 WIMBLEDON 1
Wimbledon won 2-1 on agg

SUNDERLAND 1 WATFORD 0
Sunderland won 3-0 on agg

TOTTENHAM 3 PRESTON 0
Tottenham won 4-1 on agg

WEST HAM 1 BARNET 0
West Ham won 2-1 on agg

YORK CITY 3 EVERTON 2
York City won 4-3 on agg

SHEFFIELD UTD 2 STOCKPORT 5
Stockport won 7-3 on agg

GILLINGHAM 1 BARNSLEY 0 (aet)
Gillingham won 2-1 on agg

WYCOMBE 1 NOTTM F 1 (aet)
Nottm Forest won 2-1 on agg

WEEKEND

ARSENAL 2 (Hartson 73, Parlour 89)
SUNDERLAND 0 Att: 38,016

CHELSEA 1 (Vialli 51)
NOTTM FOREST 1 (Lee 90) Att: 27,673

COVENTRY 0
BLACKBURN 0 Att: 17,032

DERBY 0
WIMBLEDON 2 (Earle 49, Gayle 70) Att: 17,022

EVERTON 2 (Kanchelskis 18, Stuart 61)
SHEFFIELD WED 0 Att: 34,160

LEICESTER 1 (Heskey 60)
LEEDS 0 Att: 20,359

SOUTHAMPTON 4 (Oakley 11, Le Tissier 29, 48, Watson 82)
MIDDLESBROUGH 0 Att: 15,230

MAN UTD 2 (Solskjaer 38, 58)
TOTTENHAM 0 Att: 54,943

WEST HAM 1 (Bilic 15)
LIVERPOOL 2 (Collymore 3, Thomas 55) Att: 25,064

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

NEWCASTLE 4 (Ferdinand 5, 22, Shearer 38, Howey 67)
ASTON VILLA 3 (Yorke 4, 59, 69) Att: 36,400

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

BLACKBURN 0
ARSENAL 2 (Wright 3, 52) Att: 24,303

DERBY 0
NEWCASTLE 1 (Sshearer 76) Att: 18,092

EVERTON 2 (Stuart 14, Speed 78)
WEST HAM 1 (Dicks 86 pen) Att: 36,571

LEEDS 2 (Wallace 46, 90)
NOTTM FOREST 0 Att: 29,225

LEICESTER 1 (Watts 44)
CHELSEA 3 (Vialli 48, Di Matteo 64, Hughes 80) Att: 20,766

MAN UTD 1 (Beckham 23)
LIVERPOOL 0 Att: 55,128

TOTTENHAM 1 (Nielsen 61)
ASTON VILLA 0 Att: 32,847

WIMBLEDON 4 (Ekoku 2, Earle 31, Leonhardsen 67, Jones 86)
SHEFFIELD WED 2 (Booth 3, Hyde 72) Att: 10,512

COVENTRY 1 (Dublin 90)
SOUTHAMPTON 1 (Le Tissier 17) Att: 15,485

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

SUNDERLAND 2 (Rae 21 pen, Russell 61)
MIDDLESBROUGH 2 (Emerson 18, Ravanelli 53) Att: 20,396

WEEKEND

ARSENAL 0
COVENTRY 0 Att: 38,140

ASTON VILLA 2 (Yorke 58, Johnson 65)
LEEDS 0 Att: 39,051

CHELSEA 2 (Minto 10, Vialli pen 85)
WIMBLEDON 4 (Earle 5, Ardley 16, Gayle 64, Ekoku 78) Att: 28,020

MIDDLESBROUGH 0
TOTTENHAM 3 (Sheringham 21, 90, Fox 23) Att: 30,125

NOTTM FOREST 1 (Saunders 2)
DERBY 1 (Dailly 58) Att: 27,771

SHEFFIELD WED 1 (Booth 3)
BLACKBURN 1 (Bohinen 74) Att: 22,191

SOUTHAMPTON 3 (Dodd 38, Le Tissier pen 59, Shipperley 89)
SUNDERLAND 0 Att: 15,225

WEST HAM 1 (Moncur 78)
LEICESTER 0 Att: 22,285

NEWCASTLE 5 (Peacock 13, Ginola 31, Ferdinand 63, Shearer 75, Albert 83)
MAN UTD 0 Att: 36,579

LIVERPOOL v EVERTON – *postponed*

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Newcastle	12	9	0	3	23	13	27
Arsenal	12	7	4	1	24	10	25
Liverpool	11	7	2	2	20	11	23
Wimbledon	12	7	2	3	22	13	23
Chelsea	12	6	4	2	21	17	22
Man United	12	5	4	3	23	19	19
Aston Villa	12	5	3	4	15	11	18
Tottenham	12	5	2	5	12	11	17
Sheffield Wed	12	4	4	4	13	17	16
Everton	10	4	3	3	11	11	15
Derby	12	3	5	4	12	14	14
West Ham	12	4	2	6	11	16	14
Leicester	12	4	2	6	9	15	14
Southampton	12	3	4	5	21	17	13
Middlesbrough	12	3	4	5	17	21	13
Sunderland	12	3	4	5	9	14	13
Leeds	12	4	1	7	11	18	13
Nottingham For	12	1	5	6	10	20	8
Coventry	11	1	5	5	4	14	8
Blackburn	12	1	4	7	10	16	7

FRANCE

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

CAEN 1 (Mendy 16)
NICE 2 (Chaouch pen 3, Debbah 80) Att: 10,000

CANNES 2 (Daury 3, Marsiglia 25)
LE HAVRE 0 Att: 4,000

LENS 0
LYON 1 (Bardon 79) Att: 19,000

MONACO 1 (Legwinski 46)
METZ 1 (Blanchard 23) Att: 3,000

MONTPELLIER 0
AUXERRE 0 Att: 10,000

NANCY 2 (Gray 1, Rabesandratana pen 36)
BASTIA 2 (Drobnjak pen 18, Moravcik 76) Att: 4,000

NANTES 3 (Mazzoni 19, Savinaud 65, Da Rocha 90)
RENNES 3 (Guivarc'h 39, 69, Huard 88) Att: 15,00

MARSEILLE 0
BORDEAUX 0 Att: 19,000

STRASBOURG 3 (Zitelli 58, 70, 87)
LILLE 0 Att: 5,000

GUINGAMP 2 (Carnot 8, Rouxel 14)
PARIS SG 2 (Rai pen 25, Leonardo 64) Att: 12,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

LE HAVRE 0
LENS 0 Att: 9,666

AUXERRE 2 (Diomede 47, Petit og 64)
MONACO 0 Att: 8,000

BASTIA 0
NANTES 0 Att: 4,500

BORDEAUX 1 (Diawara 67)
STRASBOURG 2 (Okpara 80, Baricle pen 90) Att: 13,500

LILLE 1 (Boutolle 7)
CAEN 0 Att: 7,590

METZ 0
CANNES 0 Att: 11,435

ESM Team of the Month

This is this month's ESM XI, based on votes from journalists: at *A Bola* (Portugal), *don balon* (Spain), *Foot* (Belgium), *Kicker* (Germany), *La Gazzetta dello Sport* (Italy), *onze mondial* (France), *Sport* (Switzerland), *Voetbal International* (Holland) and *World Soccer*.

LYON 1 (Gava 56)
PARIS SG 1 (Dely Valdes 86) Att: 29,740

MARSEILLE 2 (Gravelaine 42, Echouafni 73)
GUINGAMP 1 (Carnot 50) Att: 17,000

NICE 1 (Avenet og 40)
NANCY 0 Att: 4,124

RENNES 2 (Guivarc'h 17, Huard 75)
MONTPELLIER 0 Att: 9,000

WEEKEND

CAEN 0
BORDEAUX 0 Att: 10,000

CANNES 1 (Charvet 10)
AUXERRE 1 (Goma 70) Att: 6,000

GUINGAMP 1 (Candela 29)
LYON 0 Att: 6,000

LENS 2 (Delmotte 60, 70)
METZ 2 (Lang 4, Blanchard 6) Att: 15,000

MONACO 3 (Anderson da Silva 21, 73, Ikpeba 32)
RENNES 1 (Guivarc'h 43) Att: 3,000

MONTPELLIER 3 (Ferhaoui 17, Lefevre 44, Delaye 51)
BASTIA 1 (Moreau 55) Att: 7,000

NANCY 2 (Fischer 38, Bonora 66)
LILLE 2 (Becanovic 4, Abed 88) Att: 5,000

NANTES 7 (Gourvennec 12, N'Doram 15, Decroix 43, Da Rocha 52, Carotti 64, Bjekovic 67, Makelele 77)
NICE 0 Att: 10,000

PARIS SG 2 (Leonardo 37, Cauet 48)
LE HAVRE 0 Att: 35,000

STRASBOURG 2 (Zitelli pen 51, 87)
MARSEILLE 1 (Echouafni 57) Att: 14,500

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

AUXERRE 1 (Sibierski 76 pen)
LENS 0 Att: 12,000

BASTIA 0
MONACO 0 Att: 5,280

BORDEAUX 0
NANCY 1 (Gray 6) Att: 15,549

LE HAVRE 4 (Huysman 10, Bertin 24 pen, 47 pen, Wieszcycki 68)
LYON 1 (Caveglia 39) Att: 9,224

LILLE 3 (Becanovic 31 pen, 40, Renou 70)
NANTES 3 (N'Doram 9 pen, Gourvennec 51, Decroix 87) Att: 10,383

METZ 0
PARIS SG 1 (Leonardo 32) Att: 18,721

MARSEILLE 0
CAEN 1 (Rival 58) Att: 19,000

NICE 1 (Vermeulen 40)
MONTPELLIER 1 (Bakayoko 37) Att: 3,655

STRASBOURG 2 (Zitelli 3, Baticle 21)
GUINGAMP 1 (Wreh 43) Att: 12,325

RENNES 3 (Guivarc'h 42, 64 pen, Papura 82)
CANNES 0 Att: 4,098

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

CAEN 3 (Guerreiro 33, Mendy 53, Bancarel 65)
STRASBOURG 0 Att: 11,729

CANNES 1 (Abou 3)
BASTIA 1 (Camadini 89) Att: 5,000

GUINGAMP 2 (Coridon 12, Jozwiak 59)
LE HAVRE 2 (Boli 60, Kazniku 62) Att: 8,480

LENS 2 (Delmotte 41, Dallet 76)
RENNES 0 Att: 18,856

MONACO 4 (Ikpeba 36, 60, Anderson 52, 73)
NICE 0 Att: 6,000

MONTPELLIER 0
LILLE 1 (Garcion 1) Att: 7,997

NANCY 0
MARSEILLE 0 Att: 17,463

NANTES 3 (Leroux 12, N'Ddoram 45, Gourvennec pen 57)
BORDEAUX 1 (Tholot 81) Att: 21,316

LYON 0
METZ 0 Att: 20,847

PARIS SG 1 (Cauet 36)
AUXERRE 1 (Sibierski 90 pen) Att: 39,885

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Paris SG	15	9	5	1	23	6	32
Monaco	15	8	5	2	29	13	29
Auxerre	15	7	7	1	22	6	28
Lens	15	7	3	5	18	19	24
Lille	15	6	5	4	18	22	23
Metz	15	5	7	3	14	11	22
Strasbourg	15	7	1	7	18	23	22
Bordeaux	15	5	6	4	16	13	21
Bastia	15	5	6	4	18	17	21
Rennes	15	6	3	6	20	21	21
Lyon	15	5	6	4	17	21	21
Guingamp	15	5	5	5	14	14	20
Nantes	15	4	6	5	27	21	18
Cannes	15	4	6	5	10	14	18
Marseille	15	4	5	6	13	15	17
Le Havre	15	4	4	7	16	19	16
Montpellier	15	3	6	6	14	19	15
Caen	15	3	5	7	11	17	14
Nice	15	2	4	9	13	29	10
Nancy	15	1	5	9	9	20	8

GERMANY

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

KARLSRUHE 5 (Dundee 28, 50, 67, Keller 43, Schroth 58)
ARMINIA BIELEFELD 2 (Kuntz 77, Gerber 81) Att: 21,000

KOLN 2 (Vladoiu 55, Olishe pen 76)
BOCHUM 0 Att: 23,000

FORTUNA 1 (Werner pen 16)
BORUSSIA MG 0 Att: 35,000

FREIBURG 1 (Buric 58)
HANSA ROSTOCK 0 Att: 22,500

HAMBURG 1 (Sporl 87)
DUISBURG 1 (Wohlert 80) Att: 20,590

SCHALKE 1 (De Kock 2)
BAYER LEVERKUSEN 2 (Meijer 13, Sergio 24) Att: 30,960

1860 MUNICH 2 (B. Winkler 11, Pele 89)
STUTTGART 5 (Elber 23, 58, Hagner 25, Soldo 63, Bobic 69) Att: 53,000

WERDER BREMEN 3 (A. Herzog pen 23, 47, Labbadia 70)
BAYERN MUNICH 0 Att: 36,000

BOR DORTMUND 2 (Moller 35, Kohler 52)
ST PAULI 1 (Trulsen 74) Att: 48,800

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

GERMAN CUP - 2ND RND

BORUSSIA MG 1 BAYERN MUNICH 2

FORTUNA 1 HAMBURG 4

HANNOVER 96 2 1860 MUNICH 4

WALDHOF 0 FREIBURG 1

HERTHA 1 STUTTGART 1 (aet)
Stuttgart won on pens

WEEKEND

BAYER LEVERKUSEN 4 (Sergio 45, 49, Feldhoff 57, Meijer 77)
HANSA ROSTOCK 1 (Beinlich 8) Att: 18,400

BOCHUM 1 (Waldoch 63)
BORUSSIA DORTMUND 0 Att: 36,334

STUTTGART 4 (Bobic 12, T. Schneider 39, Elber 64, 68)
FREIBURG 2 (Decheiver 17, 52) Att: 53,000

ARMINIA BIELEFELD 3 (Reeb 18, U. Fuchs 73, Kuntz 90)
WERDER 1 (Labbadia 68) Att: 22,512

BAYERN MUNICH 2 (Zickler 7, Nerlinger 63)
HAMBURG 1 (Sporl 55) Att: 63,000

BORUSSIA MG 1 (Villa 84)
1860 MUNICH 0 Att: 26,700

DUISBURG 3 (Emmerling 23, Wohlert 41, Bicanic 88)
KOLN 0 Att: 18,500

ST PAULI 3 (Stanislawski 20, Propper 88, 90)
FORTUNA 0 Att: 19,795

SCHALKE 0
KARLSRUHE 1 (Dundee 12) Att: 27,860

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

FREIBURG 1 (Spanring 65)
BORUSSIA MG 0 Att: 22,500

1860 MUNICH 4 (B. Winkler 26, Borimirov 68, Jeremies 74, Walker 77)
ST PAULI 2 (Scharping 64, Stanislawski 81) Att: 25,700

BORUSSIA DORTMUND 2 (Tretschok 50, Kirovski 78)
MSV DUISBURG 0 Att: 48,800

HAMBURG 2 (Breitenreiter 6, Baron 37)
ARMINIA BIELEFELD 2 (Meissner 57, Breitkreutz 62 pen) Att: 31,180

HANSA ROSTOCK 2 (Akpoborie 74, Baumgart 90)
STUTTGART 2 (Bobic 25, Balakov 38) Att: 22,000

KARLSRUHE 1 (Tarnat 4)
BAYER LEVERKUSEN 1 (Feldhoff 74) Att: 27,000

KOLN 2 (Hauptmann 59, Polster 77 pen)
BAYERN MUNICH 4 (Klinsmann 35, 68, Scholl 56 pen, Witeczek 90) Att: 52,000

WERDER BREMEN 3 (A. Herzog 34 pen, M. Bode 59, 90)
SCHALKE 0 Att: 33,000

FORTUNA DUSSELDORF 2 (Seeliger 18, Glavas pen 21)
VfL BOCHUM 2 (Kozle 50, 75) Att: 20,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

BAYER LEVERKUSEN 0
STUTTGART 0 Att: 21,000

BOCHUM 2 (Gudjonsson 61, Reis 67)
1860 MUNICH 2 (B. Winkler 25, Walker 65) Att: 22,442

ARMINIA BIELEFELD 1 (Breitkreutz 53)
KOLN 4 (Polster 18, Schmidt 49, Vladoiu 75, Gaissmayer 89) Att: 22,512

BORUSSIA MG 2 (Kastenmaier 58, Villa 70)
HANSA ROSTOCK 0 Att: 25,500

MSV DUISBURG 0
FORTUNA DUSSELDORF 0 Att: 19,500

KARLSRUHE 1 (Hassler 43)
WERDER BREMEN 3 (Pfeifenberger 63, Labbadia 77, A. Herzog 80) Att: 22,500

ST PAULI 2 (Pisarev 22, Driller 79)
SC FREIBURG 0 Att: 19,900

SCHALKE 2 (Wilmots 28, Dooley 66)
HAMBURG 0 Att: 32,600

BAYERN MUNICH 0
BORUSSIA DORTMUND 0 Att: 63,000

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	13	8	4	1	23	12	28
VfB Stuttgart	13	8	3	2	34	12	27
Bayer Leverkusen	13	8	3	2	29	15	27
Bor. Dortmund	13	8	2	3	27	15	26
Bochum	13	6	5	2	18	16	23
Cologne	13	7	1	5	23	20	22
Werder Bremen	13	6	3	4	26	15	21
Karlsruhe	13	6	2	5	23	18	20
1860 Munich	13	4	4	5	21	22	16
Hamburg	13	4	3	6	17	20	15
Fort. Dusseldorf	13	4	3	6	8	18	15
Borussia MG	13	4	2	7	12	19	14
St Pauli	13	4	2	7	18	27	14
Schalke	13	3	4	6	13	22	13
Hansa Rostock	13	3	3	7	15	20	12
Freiburg	13	4	0	9	18	32	12
Duisburg	13	2	4	7	11	21	10
Arminia Bielefeld	13	2	4	7	12	24	10

HOLLAND

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

DE GRAAFSCHAP 2 (Godee 16, Taiwo 88)
WILLEM II 2 (Van den Berg 10, Konterman 20) Att: 8,250

RODA JC 0
FORTUNA 1 (Roest 79) Att: 8,000

GRONINGEN 1 (Kooistra 66)
AZ ALKMAAR 0 Att: 10,300

RKC 1 (Van Diemen 58)
NAC 2 (Stewart 38, Abdellaoui 42) Att: 4,825

SPARTA 1 (D de Nooijer 5)
NEC 0 Att: 3,500

FC TWENTE 1 (Bruggink 3)
AJAX 1 (Bogarde 82) Att: 10,500

UTRECHT 2 (Mols 20, Van Loen 69)
PSV 2 (Starn 19, Nilis 69) Att: 10,000

VITESSE 4 (Jochemsen 27, 35, Makaay 37, 70)
FEYENOORD 2 (Sanchez 75, Schulteman 80) Att: 9,915

VOLENDAM 2 (Govedarica 18, Samardzic 33)
HEERENVEEN 2 (Tomasson 10, Talan 54) Att: 4,200

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

FORTUNA 0
DE GRAAFSCHAP 3 (Victoria 55, Breetveld 74, Viscaal 83) Att: 4,800

PSV 2 (Cocu 57, Zenden 84)
FC TWENTE 0 Att: 26,800

AJAX 3 (Scholten 18, Babangida 23, Musampa 28)
WILLEM II 0 Att: 47,103

AZ ALKMAAR 1 (Kooijman 90)
SPARTA 2 (D. de Nooijer 41, Renfurm 85) Att: 6,956

FEYENOORD 3 (Ronald Koeman 14, Taument 55, Sanchez 60)
FC GRONINGEN 1 (Magno 49) Att: 23,206

RKC 0
VOLENDAM 0 Att: 3,000

NEC 1 (Koning 66)
HEERENVEEN 1 (Straal 79) Att: 3,269

NAC 3 (Arnold 21, Scheepers 40, Van Galen 60)
UTRECHT 3 (Van Loen 48, Mols 54, Van Nieuwkerk 90) Att: 11,450

VITESSE 1 (Jochemsen 41)
RODA JC 2 (Sibon 7, 76) Att: 5,959

WEEKEND

FORTUNA SITTARD 1 (Van Der Weert 78)
PSV EINDHOVEN 1 (Petrovic 84) Att: 7,000

HEERENVEEN 0
SPARTA 0 Att: 13,200

NAC 1 (Arnold 69)
TWENTE 2 (Bruggink 43, Bosman 90) Att: 12,716

RKC 1 (Dos Santos 42)
FEYENOORD 1 (Van Bronckhorst 58) Att: 6,100

RODA JC 0
AZ ALKMAAR 2 (Heus 63, Kooijman 90) Att: 6,300

WILLEM II 3 (Van Hintum 5, Van Der Vegt 20, De Gier 23)
GRONINGEN 1 (Sion 34) Att: 9,975

PSV THRASH SECOND-PLACED FEYENOORD 7-2 . . . BA

DE GRAAFSCHAP 2 (Schultz 37, Hendriks 72)
VITESSE 1 (Makaay 24) Att: 9,750

UTRECHT 1 (Visser 11)
AJAX 1 (Wooter 43) Att: 14,000

VOLENDAM 1 (Steur 72)
NEC 0 Att: 3,500

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

NEC 2 (Sumiala 45, Van Ejkeren 68)
UTRECHT 2 (Mols 49, Wsitschge 85) Att: 4,119

AZ 2 (Mutsaers 58, Bociek 73)
DE GRAAFSCHAP 3 (Fuchs 6, Brettveld 28, 62) Att: 7,704

WILLEM II 2 (De Gier 52, Van Hintum 71)
HEERENVEEN 2 (Tomasson 43, Nygaard 68) Att: 7,250

AJAX 1 (Bogarde 84)
VOLENDAM 1 (Aandewiel 67) Att: 47,200

GRONINGEN 2 (Gorre 81, Gorre 90)
FORTUNA 0 Att: 15,000

PSV 7 (Jonk 38, Nilis 44, Cocu 50, 67, Zenden 61, Pahlplatz 76, Degryse 81)
FEYENOORD 2 (Larsson 2, Zwijnenberg 90) Att: 30,000

SPARTA 4 (Fortes 27, Van der Laan 60, Groenendijk 73, Renfurm 85)
RODA JC 0 Att: 3,500

FC TWENTE 3 (Bruggink 23, 35, Ten Caat 50)
RKC 0 Att: 5,750

VITESSE 3 (Curovic 27, Van den Brom 41, 85)
NAC 0 Att: 5,973

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV Eindhoven	14	10	3	1	44	11	33
Feyenoord	14	10	2	2	26	17	32
Ajax	14	7	5	2	18	9	26
De Graafschap	13	7	3	3	24	16	24
Vitesse Arnhem	14	6	4	4	23	16	22
Twente Enschede	13	6	3	4	16	13	21
Heerenveen	14	5	6	3	24	15	21
Roda JC Kerkrade	14	5	5	4	15	20	20
Sparta Rotterdam	14	5	3	6	16	16	18
Volendam	14	4	6	4	16	19	18
NEC Nijmegen	14	3	7	4	18	22	16
NAC Breda	14	4	3	7	12	23	15
Utrecht	14	2	8	4	20	21	14
Willem II Tilburg	14	3	4	7	15	22	13
Fortuna Sittard	14	3	4	7	10	24	13
AZ Alkmaar	14	3	2	9	12	18	11
Groningen	14	2	5	7	14	26	11
RKC Waalwijk	14	2	3	9	11	26	9

ITALY

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

ATALANTA 1 (Inzaghi 86)
INTER 1 (Djorkaeff 45) Att: 30,000

VERONA 2 (Villa og 32, Binotto 48)
CAGLIARI 2 (Dario Silva 6, Cozza 34) Att: 15,394

JUVENTUS 1 (Padovano 9)
FIORENTINA 0 Att: 35,000

LAZIO 2 (Protti 26, Casiraghi 61)
PARMA 1 (Baggio 66) Att: 40,00

MILAN 3 (Weah 2, 73, Baggio 79)
PERUGIA 0 Att: 47,00

PIACENZA 1 (Luisa 43)
VICENZA 0 Att: 12,000

REGGIANA 1 (Valencia 78)
AS ROMA 1 (Tommasi 6) Att: 15,125

SAMPDORIA 0
NAPOLI 1 (Beto 73) Att: 24,000

UDINESE 2 (Bia 5, Bierhoff 16)
BOLOGNA 2 (Marocchi 38, Nervo 83) Att: 20,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

ITALIAN CUP - 2ND RND REPLAYS

PERUGIA 1 NOCERINA 2

SAMPDORIA 0 GENOA 2

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

FIORENTINA 0
LAZIO 0 Att: 37,066

INTER 2 (Branca 45, Djorkaeff 48)
PIACENZA 0 Att: 47,090

AS ROMA 3 (Totti 13, Cappioli 19, Balbo 89)
MILAN 0 Att: 63,217

BOLOGNA 2 (Fontolan 46, Sjalimov 60)
SAMPDORIA 1 (Carparelli 79) Att: 28,089

CAGLIARI 0
PARMA 1 (Chiesa 5) Att: 14,597

NAPOLI 1 (Pecchia 59)
UDINESE 1 (Bierhoff 76) Att: 43,845

PERUGIA 3 (Dicara 24, Giunti 69, Allegri pen 80)
ATALANTA 1 (Inzaghi 36) Att: 16,346

REGGIANA 2 (Tovalieri pen 14, Gregucci 50)
VERONA 2 (De Vitis 2 pen, Siviglia 87) Att: 11,721

VICENZA 2 (Oterto 19, Beghetto 71)
JUVENTUS 1 (Ferrara 47) Att: 19,005

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

BOLOGNA 0
FIORENTINA 2 (Batistuta 44, De Marchi og 80) Att: 28,036

VERONA 2 (Giunta 30, Orlandini 80)
AS ROMA 1 (Delvecchio 51) att: 18,817

JUVENTUS 2 (Jugovic 40, Zidane 62)
INTER 0 Att: 48,515

LAZIO 2 (Nedved 23, Signori 50)
CAGLIARI 1 (Banchelli 77) Att: 35,215

MILAN 3 (Weah 40, 58, Baggio 77)
NAPOLI 1 (Cruz 61) Att: 58,078

PARMA 1 (Chiesa 90)
PERUGIA 2 (Giunti 21, Gautieri 25) Att: 21,509

PIACENZA 3 (Luiso 23, 75, Di Francesco 87)
REGGIANA 0 Att: 9,602

SAMPDORIA 2 (Iacopino 10, Veron 28)
ATALANTA 0 Att: 21,836

UDINESE 1 (Poggi 71)
VICENZA 1 (Maini 89) Att: 16,159

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Internazionale	8	5	2	1	10	5	17
Vicenza	8	5	1	2	15	8	16
Juventus	8	4	3	1	11	7	15
Sampdoria	8	4	1	3	13	7	13
Milan	8	4	1	3	14	10	13
Bologna	8	4	1	3	13	12	13
Fiorentina	8	3	3	2	9	7	12
Udinese	8	3	3	2	10	9	12
Perugia	8	4	0	4	10	10	12
Napoli	8	3	3	2	9	11	12
Roma	8	3	2	3	14	12	11
Parma	8	3	2	3	9	9	11
Piacenza	8	3	2	3	8	9	11
Lazio	8	2	2	4	6	9	8
Cagliari	8	2	1	5	9	12	7
Atalanta	8	1	3	4	8	16	6
Verona	8	1	2	5	7	16	5
Reggiana	8	0	4	4	8	14	4

PORTUGAL

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

LECA 0
SPORTING LISBON 1 (Amunike 13)

BELENENSES 1 (Figueira 36)
FARENSE 2 (Bambo 11, Djukic 79)

GIL VICENTE 0
SETUBAL 0

MARITIMO 2 (Edmilson 40, Neves 42)
BOAVISTA 2 (Nuno Gomes 5, Tavares 17)

FC PORTO 0
ESTRELA AMADORA 0

RIO AVE 0
ESPINHO 3 (Besirovic 15, Milton Mendes 86 pen, Caetano 90)

SPORTING BRAGA 1 (Joao Pinto 90)
UNIAO LEIRIA 0

VITORIA GUIMARAES 1 (Basilio 72)
SALGUEIROS 2 (Fernando 57 Almeida, Nandinho 90)

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

BENFICA 3 (Valdo 17, Helder 88, Donizete 89)
DESPORTIVO CHAVES 0

ESPINSO 1 (Besirovic 46)
MARTIMO 0

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

BOAVISTA 0
LECA 0

ESTRELA AMADORA 2 (Rui Neves 11, Gaucho 70)
VITORIA GUIMARAES 0

SPORTING LISBON 0
FC PORTO 1 (Edmilson 26)

CHAVES 5 (Matute 20, Sabou 43, Milinkovic 58, N'Tsunda 69, Dani Daiz 75)
SPT BRAGA 2 (Mozer 40, Artur Jorge 77)

SALGUEIROS 0
BENFICA 1 (Donizete 24)

FARENSE 2 (P L Pereira 47, Monteiro 89 pen)
RIO AVE 1 (Hajry 60 pen)

UNIAO LEIRIA 2 (Mauricio 10, Luis Vouzela 89)
GIL VICENTE 0

VIT SETUBAL 2 (Ayew 58, Paulo Sergio 87)
BELENENSES 0

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

GUIMARAES 0
SPORTING LISBON 1 (Ouattara 1)

BELENENSES 2 (Fertout 8, Toranha 88)
RIO AVE 1 (Fernando 75)

GIL VICENTE 3 (Wilson pen 36, Possi 47, Carlitos 90)
CHAVES 0

LECA 1 (Nando 56)
ESPINHO 1 (Pedro 55)

MARITIMO 1 (Dauri 9)
FARENSE 0

SPORTING BRAGA 0
SALGUEIROS 0

VITORIA SETUBAL 4 (Bilro og 3, Nogueira 14, Chiquinho Conde 42, 87)
UNIAO LEIRIA 1 (Mauricio 54)

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Porto	9	7	2	0	17	2	23
Sporting Lisbon	9	6	1	2	13	6	19
Benfica	8	6	1	1	17	3	19
Espinho	9	5	2	2	13	11	17
Setubal	9	4	4	1	16	10	16
Braga	9	4	3	2	14	12	15
Farense	9	4	2	3	7	6	14
Amadora	9	4	2	3	7	6	14
Leca	9	3	3	3	10	7	12
Maritimo	9	3	3	3	11	13	12
Chaves	9	3	2	4	10	14	11
Salgueiros	9	2	4	3	8	10	10
Belenenses	9	3	1	5	11	16	10
Boavista	8	2	3	3	10	11	9
Guimaraes	9	2	2	5	12	17	8
Leiria	9	2	0	7	6	18	6
Gil Vicente	9	1	1	7	9	19	4
Rio Ave	9	0	2	7	10	19	2

SCOTLAND

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

DUNDEE UTD 1 (McSwegan 67)
ABERDEEN 0 Att: 10,359

DUNFERMLINE 3 (Britton 45, French 51, Millar 90)
RAITH ROVERS 1 (Twaddle 47) Att: 8,643

RANGERS 2 (Gough 51, Gascoigne 89)
CELTIC 0 Att: 50,210

HIBERNIAN 1 (Jackson pen 57)
HEARTS 3 (Cameron 19, 30, Robertson 40) Att: 14,746

MOTHERWELL 1 (Arnott 19)
KILMARNOCK 0 Att: 5,700

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

ABERDEEN 3 (Dodds 10, 26, Young 90)
DUNFERMLINE 0 Att: 10,500

CELTIC 1 (Van Hooijdonk 90)
MOTHERWELL 0 Att: 49,422

DUNDEE UTD 0
KILMARNOCK 0 Att: 7,365

HIBERRNIAN 2 (Jackson pen 58, Donald 62)
RANGERS 1 (Albertz 9) Att: 12,864

RAITH ROVERS 1 (Thomson 70)
HEARTS 1 (Robertson 2) Att: 6,240

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

DUNFERMLINE 1 (Tod 78)
DUNDEE UTD 1 (Winters 64) Att: 6,982

RANGERS 2 (Gascoigne 28, Laudrup 37)
ABERDEEN 2 (Irvine 40, Dodds 89) Att: 50,076

KILMARNOCK 2 (Brown 37, Wright 58)
RAITH 1 (Rougier 3) Att: 5,829

MOTHERWELL 1 (McSkimming 73)
HIBERNIAN 1 (Harper 7) Att: 6,784

HEARTS 2 (Cameron 51, McPherson 90)
CELTIC 2 (Van Hooijdonk 38, 50) Att: 13,352

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	11	8	2	1	29	10	26
Rangers	11	8	2	1	27	9	26
Aberdeen	11	5	3	3	21	11	18
Hearts	11	4	3	4	14	17	15
Hibernian	11	4	2	5	11	20	14
Dunfermline	11	3	4	4	14	22	13
Dundee United	11	3	3	5	10	11	12
Motherwell	11	2	5	4	11	16	11
Kilmarnock	11	3	2	6	15	22	11
Raith	11	1	2	8	10	24	5

SPAIN

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

MIDWEEK

SEVILLA 0
COMPOSTELA 1 (Ohen 59) Att: 40,000

WEEKEND

ESPANYOL 5 (Lardin 18, 45, Bogdanovic 37, Benitez 65, Pralija 70)
EXTREMADURA 1 (Ito 77) Att: 20,000

SANTANDER 1 (Bestchastnykh 28)
ATHLETIC BILBAO 2 (Urzaiz 41, Ciganda 70) Att: 19,000

REAL BETIS 1 (Jarni 2)
LA CORUNA 2 (Rivaldo 70, Madar 80) Att: 45,000

REAL SOCIEDAD 0
VALLADOLID 0 Att: 20,000

COMPOSTELA 0
VALENCIA 3 (Moya 47, Romario 84, 90) Att: 9,000

LOGRONES 2 (Clotet 7, Morales 89)
SEVILLA 0 Att: 11,000

RAYO VALLECANO 3 (Radtsjenko 18, Guilherme 79, Klimowicz 86)
CELTA VIGO 0 Att: 11,000

REAL OVIEDO 2 (Dubovsky pen 65, Gamboa 85)
REAL MADRID 3 (Suker 14, Mijatovic 15, Victor 44) Att: 23,061

REAL ZARAGOZA 3 (Poyet 10, Lopez 36, 46)
BARCELONA 5 (Figo 21, Ronaldo 43, 85, Popescu 72, Luis Enrique 80) Att: 34,000

TENERIFE 6 (Giner og 8, Nikiforov og 19, Juanele 36, Jokanovic pen 59, Dani 77, Llorente 88)
SPORTING GIJON 0 Att: 17,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

ATLETICO MADRID 3 (Toni 3, Geli 54, Caminero 90)
HERCULES 0. Att: 30,000.

REAL MADRID 2 (Raul 6, Suker 26)
ESPANYOL 0 Att: 60,000

ATHLETIC BILBAO 1 (Ciganda 35)
REAL SOCIEDAD 3 (Craioveanu 24, De Paula 31, Idiakez 85) Att: 40,000

BARCELONA 1 (Popescu 78)
TENERIFE 1 (Juanele 81) Att: 70,000

CELTA VIGO 3 (Gudelj 16, 27, Del Solar 63)
REAL OVIEDO 1 (Oli 47) Att: 12,000

LA CORUNA 1 (Manjarin 73)
RAYO VALLECANO 1 (Guilherme 67) Att: 20,000

EXTREMADURA 1 (Antonio 75)
RACING SANTANDER 2 (Correa 25, Bestchastnykh 86) Att: 7,000

HERCULES 0
REAL BETIS 1 (Alfonso 75) Att: 14,000

VALLADOLID 1 (Peternac 10)
REAL ZARAGOZA 1 (Poyet 68) Att: 17,000

SPORTING GIJON 1 (Julio Salinas 12)
COMPOSTELA 1 (Penev 90) Att: 15,000

VALENCIA 0
LOGRONES 1 (Morales 27) Att: 45,000

SEVILLA 0
ATLETICO MADRID 0 Att: 30,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

ATLETICO MADRID 2 (Juan Carlos 8, Simeone 13)
REAL BETIS 2 (Alfonso 1, Sabas 85) Att: 40,000

COMPOSTELA 1 (Ohen 74)
BARCELONA 5 (William 1 og, Giovanni 18, Ronaldo 35, 46, Figo 63) Att: 15,000

ESPANYOL 0
CELTA VIGO 0 Att: 25,000

REAL ZARAGOZA 1 (Higuera 49)
ATHLETIC BILBAO 1 (Ciganda 17) Att: 32,000

SEVILLA 0
VALENCIA 2 (Fernando 16, Moya 73) Att: 41,440

TENERIFE 1 (Robaina 52)
REAL VALLADOLID 3 (Peternac 2, Fernando 72, Raul 85) Att: 18,000

LOGRONES 0
SPORTING GIJON 2 (Lediakhov 32 pen, Oliete 77) Att: 15,000

RACING SANTANDER 2 (Bestchastnykh 70, Schurrer 81)
REAL MADRID 2 (Suker 75 pen, Mijatovic 83) Att: 21,000

RAYO VALLECANO 2 (Andrijasevic 34, Guilherme 39)
HERCULES 1 (Alfaro 9) Att: 8,000

REAL OVIEDO 0
LA CORUNA 1 (Donato 89) Att: 18,724

SOCIEDAD 3 (Craioveanu 7, 35, Gracia 71)
EXTREMADURA 0 Att: 20,000

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

ATH BILBAO 2 (Etxeberria 17, Guerrero 53)
TENERIFE 0 Att: 30,000

ELONA HAMMER LOGRONES 8-0 TO STAY TOP . . . FINAL RUSSIAN POSITIONS . . . EUROPEAN TABLES . . .

LA CORUNA 2 (Rivaldo 48, Madar 66)
ESPANYOL 0 Att: 25,000

EXTREMADURA 2 (Gluscevic 12, 70)
REAL ZARAGOZA 1 (Lopez 90) Att: 8,500

HERCULES 1 (Pavlicic 65)
REAL OVIEDO 1 (Oli 44) Att: 16,000

REAL MADRID 6 (Mijatovic 30, 89, Suker pen 43,68, 90, Mild og 63)
REAL SOCIEDAD 1 (Kovacevic 10) Att: 80,000

REAL VALLADOLID 3 (Peternac 10, Fernandez 15, Quevedo)
COMPOSTELA 1 (Ohen 80) Att: 18,000

BARCELONA 8 (Stoichkov 21, 55 pen, Giovanni 30, 43, Ronaldo 37, 89 pen, Clotet og 75, Pizzi 82)
LOGRONES 0 Att: 90,000

CELTA VIGO 1 (Inaqui og 60)
SANTANDER 1 (Villabona 72) Att: 13,000

REAL BETIS 3 (Finidi 29, Pier 57, Alfonso 69)
RAYO VALLECANO 0 Att: 40,000

VALENCIA 3 (Poyatos 37, Vlaovic 50, Lopez 90)
AT MADRID 1 (Esnaider 89) Att: 45,000

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	10	8	2	0	33	13	26
Real Madrid	11	7	4	0	23	9	25
La Coruna	11	7	4	0	18	6	25
Valladolid	11	6	2	3	17	10	20
Real Betis	11	5	4	2	19	9	19
Atletico Madrid	11	5	2	4	17	13	17
Real Sociedad	11	5	2	4	15	15	17
Racing Santander	11	4	5	2	14	14	17
Valencia	11	5	1	5	19	16	16
Rayo Vallecano	11	4	3	4	17	14	15
Athletic Bilbao	11	4	3	4	20	19	15
Espanyol	11	4	3	4	15	14	15
Tenerife	10	4	2	4	18	11	14
Celta Vigo	10	3	4	3	9	11	13
Oviedo	11	3	3	5	14	18	12
Sporting Gijon	10	3	3	4	11	15	12
Sevilla	11	3	2	6	9	12	11
Logrones	11	3	2	6	7	24	11
Compostela	11	2	3	6	11	25	9
Zaragoza	11	1	5	5	13	19	8
Extremadura	11	1	2	8	7	24	5
Hercules	11	1	2	8	6	22	4

SWITZERLAND

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND

LAUSANNE 1 (Udovic 40)
GRASSHOPPERS 0 Att: 8,200

LUGANO 1 (Sliekys 26)
NEUCHATEL XAMAX 2 (Lesniak 7, Kunz 9) Att: 2,100

LUCERNE 0
BASEL 3 (Giallanza 19, 45, La Placa 19) Att: 14,850

YOUNG BOYS 0
ST GALLEN 1 (Allenspach 15) Att: 3,200

FC ZURICH 3 (Konjic 33, 63, Castillo 86)
SERVETTE 1 (Ippoliti 55) Att: 3,600

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 6 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

NEUCHATEL XAMAX 1 (Lesniak 75)
SION 3 (Bonvin 80, Lukic 83, Zambaz 89) Att: 7,100

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER

MIDWEEK

BASEL 1 (Giallanza 10)
YOUNG BOYS 1 (Okolosi 35) Att: 10,500

GRASSHOPPER 0
AARAU 0 Att: 5,100

NEUCHATEL XAMAX 1 (Isabella 5)
LUCERNE 1 (Sawu 22) Att: 6,800

ST GALLEN 1 (Regtop 60)
FC ZURICH 0 Att: 6,500

SERVETTE 1 (Ippoliti 80)
LAUSANNE 2 (Sane 48, 69) Att: 5,000

SION 1 (Lukic 9)
LUGANO 0 Att: 7,700

WEEKEND

AARAU 1 (Hodel 37)
NEUCHATEL XAMAX 1 (Bonalair 68) Att: 3,500

LAUSANNE 1 (Rehn 22)
SION 1 (Lukic 70) Att: 10,400

LUCERNE 1 (Moser 42)
LUGANO 0 Att: 7,250

FC ZURICH 2 (Weiler 40, Nonda 73)
GRASSHOPPER 4 (Gren 3 pen, 73 pen, Smilijanic 85, Moldovan 90) Att: 9,600

BASEL 2 (Giallanza 39, H. Yakin 85)
ST GALLEN 2 (Regtop 27, Dittgen 75) Att: 14,000

YOUNG BOYS 1 (Lengen 85)
SERVETTE 1 (Ippoliti 79) Att: 3,600

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

WEEKEND

GRASSHOPPER 6 (Bekirovski 50, Subiat 66, Moldovan 75, 85, Kunz 82, Bonalair pen 89)
YOUNG BOYS 2 (Bekirovski 50, Kehrli 57) Att: 3,100

LUGANO 0
AARAU 1 (Skrzypczak 64) Att: 1,600

NEUCHATEL XAMAX 6 (Lesniak 29, Wittl 45, 60, Lesniak 79, Kunz 82, Bonalair pen 89)
LAUSANNE 1 (Carrasco 18) Att: 8,600

ST GALLEN 3 (Moura 18, Regtop pen 48, Moura 56)
LUCERNE 2 (Wolf 19, Kogl 51) Att: 10,000

SERVETTE 2 (Nava 12, Nemecek 25)
BASEL 0 Att: 4,500

FC SION 0
FC ZURICH 1 (Nonda 77) Att: 10,400

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Neuchatel Xamax	19	10	7	2	30	18	37
Grasshopper	19	9	8	2	38	23	35
Sion	18	9	6	3	29	17	33
Lausanne	19	9	5	5	34	28	32
St. Gallen	19	7	8	4	19	20	29
Aarau	18	7	6	5	16	12	27
Zurich	19	5	8	6	21	24	23
Servette	19	5	7	7	22	22	22
Lucerne	19	4	9	6	23	27	21
Basel	19	4	8	7	30	33	20
Lugano	19	2	8	9	13	27	14
Young Boys	19	1	2	16	13	37	5

EUROPEAN TABLES

ALBANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Flamurtari	10	8	1	1	22	5	25
Tirana	10	5	4	1	17	4	19
Shkumbini	10	6	2	2	11	8	19
Partizani	10	5	3	2	10	4	18
Vllaznia	10	6	0	4	12	9	18
Besa	10	5	2	3	9	5	17
Apollonia	10	4	3	3	12	10	15
Bylis	10	4	3	3	9	8	15
Tomorri	10	3	3	4	7	10	13
Skenderbeu	10	4	1	5	9	14	13
Laci	10	3	3	4	10	11	12
Teuta	10	3	3	4	5	6	12
Shqiponja	10	3	2	5	7	9	11
Lushnja	10	2	4	4	8	11	10
Elbasani	10	3	1	6	6	11	10
Olimpik	10	3	0	7	12	16	9
Albania Tabak	10	3	0	7	6	13	9
Albpetrol	10	2	1	7	7	20	7

CROATIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	11	9	1	1	34	11	28
Hajduk	11	8	2	1	23	5	26
Zagreb	11	6	4	1	19	9	22
Hr. Dragovoljac	11	5	5	1	24	13	20
Segesta	11	3	7	1	15	11	16
Cibalia	11	5	0	6	14	22	15
Osijek	11	4	2	5	13	13	14
Varteks	11	4	2	5	13	18	14
Mladost	11	3	4	4	13	14	13
Rijeka	11	3	4	4	12	13	13
Sibenik	11	3	4	4	7	11	13
Zadarkomerc	11	2	4	5	13	17	10
Istra	11	2	4	5	10	14	10
Orijent	11	1	7	3	11	17	10
Marsonia	11	2	2	7	5	25	8
Inker	11	1	2	8	7	20	5

CYPRUS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anorthosis	6	5	1	0	16	3	16
APOEL Nicosia	6	4	0	2	15	8	12
AEK Larnaca	6	3	2	1	12	9	11
Enosis Paralimni	6	3	2	1	11	9	11
Apollon Limassol	6	3	1	2	9	8	10
Omonia Nicosia	6	3	1	2	8	8	10
Salamina	6	2	3	1	10	7	9
Alki Larnaca	6	2	1	3	10	8	7
Aris Limassol	6	2	1	3	6	7	7
Ethnikos Achna	6	2	1	3	5	9	7
Olympiakos	6	2	1	3	7	14	7
APOP Paphos	6	1	2	3	10	14	5
Anagennisis	6	1	1	4	7	13	4
APEP Kyperounda	6	0	1	5	6	15	1

CZECH REP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slovan Liberec	11	6	4	1	15	9	22
Slavia Prague	11	5	4	2	22	11	19
Boby Brno	11	5	4	2	16	12	19
Petra Drnovice	11	5	3	3	26	20	18
Kaucuk Opava	11	4	6	1	11	8	18
FK Jablonec	11	5	2	4	15	8	17
Sigma Olomouc	11	3	6	2	15	9	15
Banik Ostrava	11	3	6	2	15	13	15
FK Teplice	11	4	3	4	13	16	15
Sparta Prague	11	3	5	3	13	12	14
Ceske Budejovice	11	3	5	3	12	14	14
FC Karvina	11	3	3	5	12	19	12
Viktoria Plzen	11	2	4	5	7	14	10
Hradec Kralove	11	1	5	5	10	17	8
Viktoria Zizkov	11	2	2	7	8	17	8
Bohemians	11	2	2	7	12	23	8

DENMARK

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brondby	14	9	3	2	26	14	30
Alborg	14	9	2	3	30	19	29
AGF Århus	14	8	1	5	39	21	25
Helfolge	14	7	1	6	13	15	22
Odense	14	6	3	5	26	23	21
Lyngby	14	6	3	5	24	25	21
Vejle	14	4	6	4	23	18	18
Viborg	14	3	5	6	15	26	14
Silkeborg	14	2	7	5	18	31	13
Hvidovre	14	2	6	6	15	19	12
Copenhagen	14	2	6	6	15	22	12
AB Aalborg	14	1	7	6	19	30	10

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	7	5	2	0	13	2	17
Panathinaikos	7	5	1	1	15	5	16
OFI Crete	7	5	0	2	11	6	15
Paniliakos	7	4	2	1	9	7	14
Panachaiki	7	4	2	1	8	6	14
AEK Athens	6	4	1	1	14	5	13
Ionikos	7	3	3	1	8	4	12
Xanthi	7	2	3	2	8	7	9
PAOK	7	2	3	2	4	6	9
Kalamata	7	2	3	2	4	8	9
Verria	7	2	2	3	9	7	8
Aris	7	1	3	3	5	9	6
Kavala	7	1	3	3	2	4	6
Iraklis	7	1	2	4	3	11	5
Edessaikos	7	1	2	4	7	11	5
Apollon	7	1	1	5	4	12	4
Athinaikos	6	1	1	4	3	8	4
Kastoria	7	0	2	5	4	13	2

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MTK FC	13	13	0	0	40	8	39
Ferencvaros	13	11	1	1	26	12	34
Ujpest TE	13	9	2	2	30	13	29
Vasas	13	8	2	3	17	9	26
DVSC Epona	13	7	2	4	27	17	23
BVSC	13	6	3	4	20	13	21
Gyori ETO	13	6	2	5	14	18	20
Haladas	13	5	4	4	18	13	19
ZTE	13	6	1	6	15	20	19
Kispest	13	5	3	5	18	18	18
Bekescsaba	13	4	3	6	17	17	15
Videoton	13	3	5	5	16	17	14
III.ker. TVE	13	3	4	6	17	25	13
Vac	13	2	3	8	16	26	9
Csepel	13	1	5	7	12	23	8
Stadler FC	13	2	2	9	6	20	8
Siofok	13	2	2	9	7	25	8
Pecs	13	1	2	10	8	30	5

ISRAEL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hap Petah Tikva	8	7	1	0	18	5	22
Betar Jerusalem	8	6	2	0	17	5	20
Hapoel Beersheba	8	5	0	3	12	7	15
Mac Petah Tikva	8	5	0	3	9	7	15
Maccabi Tel Aviv	8	4	2	2	14	12	14
Maccabi Haifa	8	4	2	2	11	9	14
Bnei Yehuda	8	4	2	2	9	9	14
Hapoel Kfar Sava	8	4	1	3	7	6	13
Hapoel Jerusalem	8	4	1	3	10	10	13
Ironi Rishon Lezion	8	3	1	4	11	14	10
Hapoel Taibe	8	3	0	5	7	13	9
Hapoel Tel Aviv	8	2	2	4	6	9	8
Hapoel Haifa	8	2	1	5	11	15	7
Hapoel Beit She'an	8	1	1	6	5	9	4
Zafririm Holon	8	1	1	6	5	12	4
Maccabi Herzliya	8	0	1	7	1	11	1

LUXEMBOURG

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CS Grevenmacher	7	7	0	0	21	6	21
Jeunesse Esch	7	6	1	0	19	5	19
FC Wiltz	7	5	0	2	11	11	15
Avenir Beggen	7	3	2	2	15	8	11
Sporting Mertzig	7	3	2	2	15	11	11
CS Hobscheid	7	3	1	3	6	11	10
Union	7	2	3	2	13	9	9
Spora	7	0	5	2	9	12	5
Aris Bonnevoie	7	1	2	4	9	14	5
US Rumelange	7	1	2	4	8	14	5
F91 Dudelange	7	1	1	5	4	16	4
FC Rodange	7	0	1	6	6	19	1

MACEDONIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sileks	10	9	1	0	29	6	28
Bregainica	10	6	1	3	11	11	19
Vardar	10	6	2	2	12	5	17
Pobeda	10	5	2	3	16	14	17
Sloga	10	5	1	4	18	12	16
Skendija	10	5	1	4	11	11	16
Sasa	10	3	4	3	10	13	13
Makedonija	10	4	0	6	12	13	12
Belasica Eta	10	3	3	4	11	14	12
Cementarnica	10	3	1	6	12	17	10
Balkan	10	2	3	5	11	14	9
Palister	10	2	3	5	10	14	9
Tikves	10	2	3	5	9	19	9
Rudar	10	2	1	7	9	20	7

NORTHERN IRELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Coleraine	3	3	0	0	5	2	9
Crusaders	3	2	1	0	6	3	7
Linfield	3	1	1	1	3	1	4
Portadown	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Glenavon	3	1	1	1	4	6	4
Cliftonville	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Glentoran	3	0	1	2	4	6	1
Ards	3	0	0	3	3	7	0

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Legia Warsaw	15	11	2	2	29	12	35
Widzew Lodz	15	10	4	1	31	8	34
GKS Katowice	15	7	6	2	21	16	27
Amica Wronki	15	7	3	5	18	18	24
R. Czestochowa	15	6	4	5	16	15	22
Lech Poznan	15	6	2	7	18	20	20
Stomi Olsztyn	15	5	4	6	24	22	19
Odra Wodzislaw	15	5	4	6	21	23	19
Wisla Krakow	15	5	4	6	12	15	19
Sokol Tychy	15	5	4	6	18	23	19
GKS Belchatow	15	5	3	7	18	20	18
Polonia Warsaw	15	5	3	7	15	22	18
Hutnik Krakow	15	5	3	7	14	18	18
Zaglebie Lubin	15	4	5	6	16	20	17
LKS Lodz	15	3	7	5	16	19	16
Gornik Zabrze	15	4	3	8	17	23	15
Slask Wroclaw	15	4	3	8	14	19	15
Ruch Chorzow	15	3	6	6	13	18	15

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Steaua Bucharest	12	8	2	2	21	11	26
FC National	12	8	2	2	20	10	26
Otelul Galati	12	7	2	3	22	12	23
Din. Bucharest	12	6	3	3	17	9	21
Chindia Tirgoviste	12	6	2	4	14	12	20
Universitatea Cluj	12	5	4	3	17	15	19
Jiul Petrosani	12	6	1	5	13	17	19
Ceahlaul	12	5	3	4	16	17	18
FC Arges Pitesti	12	5	2	5	18	16	17
AS Bacau	12	4	4	4	14	12	16
Univ. Craiova	12	4	3	5	19	17	15
FC Farul	12	4	3	5	14	14	15
Sportul Student	12	4	2	6	15	18	14
Rapid Bucharest	12	4	2	6	13	16	14
FC Petrolul	12	3	3	6	16	16	12
Gloria Bistrita	12	2	3	7	8	19	9
FC Brasov	12	2	3	7	11	24	9
Poli. Timisoara	12	2	2	8	16	29	8

RUSSIA (FINAL TABLE)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alania Vladikavkaz	34	22	6	6	64	35	72
Spartak Moscow	34	21	9	4	70	34	72
Rotor Volgograd	34	21	7	6	58	27	70
Dynamo Moscow	34	20	7	7	60	35	67
CSKA Moscow	34	20	6	8	58	35	66
Lok. Moscow	34	15	10	9	45	30	55
Baltika Kaliningrad	34	12	10	12	44	35	46
Lok. N. Novgorod	34	13	6	15	39	51	45
Soviet Wings	34	12	9	13	31	38	45
Zenit	34	13	4	17	32	37	43
Rostselmash	34	11	8	15	58	59	41
Torpedo Moscow	34	10	11	13	42	51	41
Chernomorets	34	11	6	17	38	51	39
Kamaz Chelny	34	10	6	18	43	57	36
Zhemchuzhina	34	10	6	18	36	57	36
Uralmash	34	8	9	17	38	57	33
Tekstilshchik	34	4	12	18	25	46	24
Lada Togliatti	34	4	7	23	18	64	19

Alania Valdikavkaz and Spartak Moscow to play-off for league title.
Uralmash Yekaterinburg, Tekstilshchik Kamyshin and Lada Togliatti relegated.

SLOVAKIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spartak Trnava	11	8	3	0	26	7	27
Tatran Presov	11	8	1	2	15	7	25
FC Kosice	11	7	2	2	20	12	23
Slovan Bratislava	11	7	0	4	20	9	21
Inter Bratislava	11	5	3	3	15	13	18
DAC Dunajska	11	5	1	5	11	16	16
Petrimex Prievidza	11	4	2	5	12	15	14
Lok Kosice	11	3	4	4	7	9	13
Kerametal	11	3	3	5	15	16	12
MSK Zilina	11	4	0	7	8	11	12
JAS Bardejov	11	3	3	5	8	13	12
FC Rimavska	11	4	0	7	12	20	12
Artmedia	11	3	3	5	8	18	12
Dukla Banska	11	3	2	6	14	15	11
Chemlon	11	3	2	6	7	12	11
FC Nitra	11	3	1	7	12	17	10

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	12	10	1	1	35	9	31
Fenerbahce	12	9	1	2	29	8	28
Besiktas	12	8	3	1	29	6	27
Trabzonspor	12	8	2	2	24	12	26
Kocaelispor	12	6	3	3	17	12	21
Bursaspor	12	6	3	3	12	7	21
Samsunspor	12	5	3	4	15	16	18
Gaziantepspor	12	5	4	3	15	13	19
Sariyer	12	4	3	5	15	19	15
Altay	12	4	1	7	12	27	13
Istanbulspor	12	3	3	6	11	15	12
Antalyaspor	12	3	4	5	14	16	13
Genclerbirligi	12	3	3	6	10	16	12
Ankaragucu	12	5	0	7	15	19	15
Dardanelspor	12	2	3	6	10	17	12
Vansor	12	3	2	7	12	24	11
Denizlispor	12	2	2	8	12	26	8
Zeytinburnuspor	12	0	1	11	8	31	1

YUGOSLAVIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Partizan	12	10	2	0	37	7	32
Red Star	11	8	2	1	20	9	26
Vojvodina	12	6	3	3	16	10	21
Proleter	12	5	1	6	20	19	16
Becej	12	4	4	4	13	17	16
Zemun	12	3	6	3	11	11	15
Mladost (L)	12	4	3	5	18	20	15
Buducnost (P)	12	4	2	6	12	18	14
Hajduk	12	3	4	5	12	11	13
Rad	11	3	3	5	12	11	12
Cukaricki	12	3	3	6	9	17	12
Borac	12	1	1	10	5	35	4

BRANN BERGEN KNOCK PSV OUT OF CUP-WINNERS CU

CUP-WINNERS CUP

2ND RND, 1ST LEG (Oct 17)

BARCELONA 3 (Giovanni 33, 34, Luis Figo 54)
RED STAR BELGRADE 1 (Zivkovic 21
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 73,000
** Marinovic (Red Star) sent off, 86min.*

BENFICA 1 (Joao Pinto 8)
LOKOMOTIV MOSCOW 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000

BRANN BERGEN 2 (Mjelde 29, 34)
PSV EINDHOVEN 1 (Cocu 90)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 7,811
Brann: B Kristinsson - Brendsaether, Ludvigsen, Eftervaag, M Pedersen, Bakkerud, Helland, J O Pedersen (M Johanson 85), Gylfason, T A Flo, Hjelde.
PSV: Waterreus - Marcos Santos, Stam, Valckx, Petrovic (Zenden 64), Degryse, Van der Doelen (Van der Weerden 37), Cocu, Numan, Nilis, Eykelkamp.

FIORENTINA 2 (Batistuta 7, Schwarz 57)
SPARTA PRAGUE 1 (Siegl 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 19,000

GALATASARAY 4 (Hakan Sukur 5, 31, Tugay 14, Hakan 49)
PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN 2 (Le Guen 19, Dely Valdes 20)
HT: 3-2. **Att:** 30,000

NIMES 1 (Fidani 89)
AIK STOCKHOLM 3 (Simpson 9, Pacha 12, Johansson 70)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 12,000

OLIMPIJA LJUBLJANA 0
AEK ATHENS 2 (Kostis 12, Ketsbaia 49)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 3,000

SION 1 (Bonvin 11)
LIVERPOOL 2 (Fowler 24, Barnes 60)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 16,500. **Ref:** A Lopez Nieto (Spa)
Sion: Lehmann - Gaspoz, Quentin, Wicky, Lukic, Vercruysse, Bonvin (Vincze 80), Sylvestre, Lonfat, Zambaz (Chassot 67), Milton.
Liverpool: James - Matteo, Bjornebye, Babb, McAteer, Scales, McManaman, Berger, Fowler (Redknapp 68), Barnes, Thomas.

2ND RND, 2ND LEG (Oct 31)

AEK ATHENS 4 (Saveski 4, Batista 34, Maladenis 80, Kostis 86)
OLIMPIJA LJUBLJANA 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 20,000
AEK won 6-0 on agg

AIK STOCKHOLM 0
NIMES 1 (Brundin og 69)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,620. **Ref:** Michel (Ska)
AIK won 3-2 on agg
Jeunechamp (Nimes) sent off, 85min.

LOKOMOTIV MOZCOW 2 (Solomatin 9, Garas 58)
BENFICA 3 (Panduru 47, Osmar Candido 63, Joao Pinto 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,500
Benfica won 4-2 on agg
Gurenko (Lok Moscow) sent off, 30min.

PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN 4 (Leonardo 10, Valdes 23, Loko 59, Rai 78)
GALATASARAY 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 34,032
Paris SG won 6-4 on agg
Paris SG: Lama - Algerino (Fournier 71), Roche, Le Guen, N'Gotty, Cauet, Guerin (Kenedy 63), Rai (Leroy 86), Leonardo, Dely Valdes, Loko.
Galatasaray: Demirbas - Bekir, Bulent Korkmaz, Vedat, Erdem Arif, Hakan (Knup 65), Ergun, Mert (Okan 46), Hagi, Umit (Evren Nuri 60), Hakan.

PSV EINDHOVEN 2 (Eykelkamp 74, Zenden 83)
BRANN 2 (Hausund 35, T A Flo 59)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 19,000
Brann won 4-3 on agg

RED STAR BELGRADE 1 (Jovicic 47)
BARCELONA 1 (Giovanni 48)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 50,000
Barcelona won 4-2 on agg
Red Star: Milojevic - Zivkovic, Djorovic, Njegus, Stankovic, Ognjenovic, Jovicic, Ljubojevic, Vanic, Anic, Boskovic (Pantelic 46).
Barcelona: Vitor Baia - Abelardo, Nadal, Sergi, Guardiola, Popescu, 80), Giovanni, Blanc, Luis Enrique, Ronaldo (Pizzi 80), Stoichkov.

SPARTA PRAGUE 1 (Lokvenc 5)
FIORENTINA 1 (Robbiati 63)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,021
Fiorentina won 3-2 on agg

LIVERPOOL 6 (McManaman 28, Bjornebye 54, Barnes 65, Fowler 70, 71, Berger 89)
FC SION 3 (Chassot 19, 64, Bonvin 23)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 38,514. **Ref:** Strampe (Ger)
Liverpool: James - Babb, Scales (Redknapp 60), Matteo, McAteer, Barnes, Thomas, McManaman, Bjornebye, Berger, Fowler.
Sion: Lehmann - Gaspoz (Vuhlmann 76), Quentin, Wicky, Vercruysse, Bonvin (Vincze 76), Chassot, Sylvestre, Colombo, Lonfat (Zambaz 46), Milton.

UEFA CUP

2ND RND, 1ST LEG

(Oct 15 unless stated)

HAMBURG 3 (Breitenreiter 8, Baron 39, Kovacevic 58)
MOSCOW SPARTAK 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 17,000 (Oct 16)

ABERDEEN 0
BRONDBY 2 (Ebbe Sand 44, Bo Hansen 89)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** M Beusan (Cro)
Aberdeen: Walker - McKimmie, Tzvetanov, Rowson, Irvine, Inglis, Miller, Dodds, Windass, Kiriakov (Shearer 72), Young.
Brondby: Krogh - Nielsen, Ravn (Thogersen 24), Daugaard, Moller (Hansen 80), Vilfort, Sand, Colding, Eggen, Jensen, Skarballius.

BORUSSIA MONCHENGLADBACH 2 (Hochstatter 55, Andersson 72)
MONACO 4 (Collins 12, Ikpeba 56, 90, Henry 77)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 25,000

CLUB BRUGGE 2 (Verheyen 10, Staelens 39)
NATIONAL BUCHAREST 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 7,000

ESPANYOL 0
FEYENOORD 3 (Van Gastel 21, Taument 55, Larsson 89)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 29,000

FERENCVAROS 3 (Horvath 7, Lisztes 17, 57)
NEWCASTLE 2 (Ferdinand 25, Shearer 35)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 17,000. **Ref:** Sundell (Swe)
Ferencvaros: Szeiler - Kuznyecov, Telek, N Nagy, Horvath (Zavadsky 60), Szucs, Hrutka, Miriuta, Nyilas, Lisztes (Hollo 80), Nichenko.
Newcastle: Srnicek, Watson, Beresford, Peacock, Albert, Batty, Lee, Gillespie (Ginola 65), Beardsley, Shearer, Ferdinand.

HELSINGBORG 2 (Mattias Jonsson 13, 60)
XAMAX NEUCHATEL 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 7,808

INTERNAZIONALE 1 (Angloma 80)
CASINO GRAZ 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,145

KARLSRUHE 3 (Fink 45, 75, Dundee 58)
AS ROMA 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000

LAZIO 1 (Nedved 68)
TENERIFE 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,000

LEGIA WARSAW 1 (Sokolowski 22)
BESIKTAS 1 (Orhan 70)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,500

METZ 2 (Amara Traore 5, Lang 13)
SPORTING LISBON 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 15,000

SCHALKE 1 (Max 77)
TRABZONSPOR 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 52,000

SLAVIA PRAGUE 0
VALENCIA 1 (Moya 74)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,012. **Ref:** Ahmet Cakar (Tur)

TBILISI DYNAMO 1 (Gogichaishvili 26 pen)
BOAVISTA 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 65,000

VITORIA GUIMARAES 1 (Ricardo Lopes 7)
ANDERLECHT 1 (Zetterberg 78)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,500

2ND RND, 2ND LEG

(Oct 29 unless stated)

ANDERLECHT 0
VITORIA GUIMARAES 0
Att: 18,000
Agg: 1-1, Anderlecht won on away goals

BESIKTAS 2 (Amokachi 14, Yankov 78)
LEGIA WARSAW 1 (Kucharski 37)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 32,500
Besiktas won 3-2 on agg

BOAVISTA 5 (Latapy 3, 67, Hasselbank 23, 55, Tavares 90)
DYNAMO TBILISI 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 16,000
Boavista won 5-1 on agg

BRONDBY 0
ABERDEEN 0
Att: 12,005. **Ref:** Melnichuk (Ukr)
Brondby won 2-0 on agg
Brondby: Krogh - Nielsen, Ravn (Risager 76), Daugaard, Moller, Vilfort, Sand (Bjur 44), Hansen (Bagger 68), Colding, Eggen, Skarballius.
Aberdeen: Walker - McKimmie, Irvine, Miller (Craig 76), Kiriakov, Dodds, Rowson, Booth (Woodthorpe 63), Windass, Young, Tzvetanov.

CASINO GRAZ 1 (Sabitzer 3 pen)
INTERNAZIONALE 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,500. **Ref:** Veissiere (Fra)
Agg: 1-1, Inter won 5-4 on pens
Ince (Inter) sent off, 95min.

FEYENOORD 0
ESPANYOL 1 (Arteaga 9)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 29,000
Feyenoord won 3-1 on agg

MONACO 0
BORUSSIA MONCHENGLADBACH 1 (Klinkert 70)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 12,000
Monaco won 4-3 on agg

MOSCOW SPARTAK 2 (Meleshin 10, Tikhonov 42)
HAMBURG 2 (Schupp 29, Hartmann 73)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 7,000
Hamburg won 5-2 on agg

NATIONAL BUCHAREST 1 (Niculescu 64)
CLUB BRUGGE 1 (Verheyen 63)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 15,000
Club Brugge won 3-1 on agg

NEUCHATEL XAMAX 1 (Bonalair 51 pen)
HELSINGBORGS 1 (Jonsson 43)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,200
Helsingborgs won 3-1 on agg

NEWCASTLE 4 (Asprilla 42, 58, Ginola 65, Ferdinand 90)
FERENCVAROS 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 35,740. **Ref:** Khussailnov (Rus)
Newcastle won 6-3 on agg
Newcastle: Srnicek - Peacock, Albert, Elliott, Batty, Lee, Gillespie (Barton 90), Ginola, Beardsley, Asprilla, Ferdinand.
Ferencvaros: Szeller - Telek, Kuznyecov (Arany 54), Hrutka, Nyilas, Szucs, Miriuta (Zavadsky 30), Jagodics, N Nagy, Horvath (Hollo 63), Nichenko.

AS ROMA 2 (Balbo 21, 26)
KARLSRUHE 1 (Keller 82)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 46,439
Karlsruhe won 4-2 on agg

SPORTING LISBON 2 (Sa Pinto 73, 83)
METZ 1 (Arpinon 17)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,000
Metz won 3-2 on agg

TENERIFE 5 (Nesta og 15, Kodro 27, Juanele 38, 62, Jokanovic 48)
LAZIO 3 (Nedved 13, Fuser 30, Casiraghi 46)
HT: 3-2. **Att:** 21,000
Tenerife won 5-4 on agg

TRABZONSPOR 3 (Shota Arveladze 55, Hami 66, 71)
SCHALKE 3 (De Kock 33, 36, Max 73)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 25,000
Schalke won 4-3 on agg

VALENCIA 0
SLAVIA PRAGUE 0
Att: 37,000
Valencia won 1-0 on agg
Zubizarreta (Valencia) sent off, 50min.

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4

Oct 4 - Cairo - AfChp qual
EGYPT 1
MOROCCO 1
Att: 50,000

Oct 4 - Ambato - intl friendly
ECUADOR 2 (Delgado 19, 90)
JAMAICA 1 (Lowe 43)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Reinoso (Ecu)
Ecuador: Morales (Cevallos 46) - Burbano, Montano, M Tenorio (Smith 75), Mendez, Hurtado (Obregon 70), Carabali (Diaz 80), De la Cruz, Gilson, Fernandez, Delgado.
Jamaica: Barrett - Brown, Dixon, Messam, F DAvis, Stewart (Goodson 72), Cargill*, Wright (Peterkin 40), Whitmore, Onandi Lowe (P Davis 88), Boyd.
** = Cargill sent off, 76min.*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

Oct 5 - Tallinn - WC qual
ESTONIA 1 (Hohlov-Simpson 52)
BELARUS 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 900. **Ref:** O'Hanlon (RI)
Estonia: Poom - Lemsalu, Rooba, Hohlov-Simson, Zelinski, Alonen, Rooba (T Kallaste 58), Kristal (Arbeiter 90), Reim, Oper (Kirs 26).
Belarus: Shantalosov - Gurenko, Ostrovski, Shtanouk, Khatskevich, Vergeichik (Baronov 43; Chernyavski 77), Kulchi, Maleev, Belkevich, Makovski, Katchuro.

Oct 5 - Riga - WC qual
LATVIA 0
SCOTLAND 2 (Collins 18, Jackson 75)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 9,500. **Ref:** Ulrich (Cze)
Latvia: Karavajevs - Troickis, Astafievs, Zemlinskis, Shevljakovs, Stepanov, V Ivanovs, Bledidelis, Rimkus, Babicevs (Stolcers 46), Pahars.
Scotland: Goram - Burley, Boyd, Calderwood, Whyte, T McKinlay (McNamara 80), Spencer (Dodds 59), McCall (Lambert 46), Jackson, McAllister, Collins.

Oct 5 - Vilnius - WC qual
LITHUANIA 2 (Jankauskas 23 pen, Shlekis 74)
ICELAND 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Marnix (Bel)
Lithuania: Stauce - Narbekovas (Zvingilas 90), Slekys, Sukristovas, Jankauskas, Tereskinas, Skarbalius, Maciulevicius (Baltusnikas 46), Zutautas, Miknevicius, Vainoras.
Iceland: B Kristinsson - L Sigurdsson (O Thordarson 85), T Gudjonsson, S Jonsson, Adolfsson, R Kristinsson, Bergsson, H Gudjonsson (A Gretarsson 79), Dadason, A Gudjohnsen (A Gunnlaugsson 57), Sverrisson.

Oct 5 - Chisinau - WC qual
MOLDOVA 1 (Curtianu 11)
ITALY 3 (Ravanelli 8, 87 pen, Casiraghi 68)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Grabher (Aut)
Moldova: Romanenco - Secu, Toloconicov, Culibaba, Testimiteanu, Galdamaschiuc, Curteanu (Miterev 52), Epureanu, Shishkin, Rebeja (Rogachev 78), Cleschenko.
Italy: Toldo - Nesta, Ferrara, Costacurta, Maldini, Conte, Di Matteo, Carboni (Zola 70), Chiesa (Di Livio 46), Casiraghi, Ravanelli.

Oct 5 - Belfast - WC qual
NORTHERN IRELAND 1 (Lennon 30)
ARMENIA 1 (Adouyan 8)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Danilovski (Mac)
N Ireland: Fettis - Nolan, Rowland, Hill, Hunter, Lomas, Gillespie, Lennon (Magilton 61), Dowie, Gray, Hughes.
Armenia: Berezoviki - Ervand, Khathatryan, Hovsepyan, Hovhaffifyaf, Vardanyan, Petrosyan (Avetisyan 81), Tonoyan (Miafayn 55), Mkhitaryan, Adouyan, Mikayelyan (Petrosyan 70).

Oct 5 - Kiev - WC qual
UKRAINE 2 (Popov 5, Maksimov 88)
PORTUGAL 1 (Figo 83)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 51,300. **Ref:** Nielsen (Den)
Ukraine: Suslov - Dmytrulin, Skrypnyk, Holovko, Vashchuk, Popov, Maksimov, Zubov (Yesin 58), Kosovsky, Kryventsov (Luzhny 69), Rebrov (Guseynov 81).
Portugal: Vitor Baia - Secretario, Rui Oliveira (Folha 16), Oceano (Paulo Bento 64), Fernando Couto, Helder, Luis Figo, Joao Vieira Pinto, Sa Pinto (Paulo Alves 64), Rui Costa, Joao Santos.

Oct 5 - Cardiff - WC qual
WALES 1 (Saunders 17)
HOLLAND 3 (Van Hooydonk 72, 75, R de Boer 79)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Lopez Nieto (Spa)
Wales: Southall - Bowen, Pembridge (Legg 65), Browning (Jenkins 83), Melville, Symons, Horne, Robinson, Saunders, Hughes, Speed.
Holland: Van der Sar - Vierklau (Van Hooydonk 76), Valckx, F de Boer, Bogarde, Jonk, Winter, Jordi Cruyff (Makaay 46), R de Boer (Van Bronckhorst 89), Seedorf, Cocu.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6

Oct 6 - Panama City - WC qual
PANAMA 1 (Cubillas 45)
EL SALVADOR 1 (Arce 52)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000
Panama: James - Botello, Delgado (Velardo 78), Poyatos, Villanueva (Serrano 46), Rodriguez, Cubillas, Guevara, Piggott (Diaz 79), Julio Cesar, Dely Valdes, Jorge Dely Valdes.
El Salvador: Guevara - Osorio, Carcamo (Trigueros 80), Iraheta Sanabria, Lazo, Castro, Rodriguez, Cienfuegos, Rivera (Burgos 63), Diaz Arce, Cerritos (Medrano 85).

Oct 6 - Port of Spain - WC qual
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO 1 (Nixon 39)
GUATEMALA 1 (Ramirez 24)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 20,000
Trinidad and Tobago: Russell - Elkock, Rougier, Lee, Faustin, Dwarika, Latapy (Wise), Eve, Dixon, Yorke, Nakhid.
Guatemala: Estrada - Ruano, Molina, Miranda, Giron, Machon, Leon, Funes, Julio Rodas (Westphal), Ramirez (Jorge Rodas), Valencia (Quintana).

Oct 6 - Algiers - Af Chp qual
ALGERIA 4 (Mesabah 7, 69, Moussa Saib 41, 89)

. . ESTONIA - SCOTLAND FARCE IN WORLD CUP QUALIFIER . . . ENGLAND SCRAPE PAST POLES . . .

IVORY COAST 1 (Joel Tiehi 71)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 20,000

Oct 6 - Cotonou - Af Chp qual
BENIN 1 (Moussa Latoudji 38)
MALI 2 (Toure Bassala 54, Brima Traore 78)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 40,000

Oct 6 - Libreville - Af Chp qual
GABON 0
CAMEROON 0
Att: 11,000

Oct 6 - Accra - Af Chp qual
GHANA 2 (Felix Aboagye 7, Kim Grant 30)
ANGOLA 1 (Antonio Alvesa 2)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 34,000

Oct 6 - Bangui - Af Chp qual
GUINEA 3 (Momo Wadder Souma 27, 79, Mousa Keita 85)
CENTRAL AFRICA REP 2 (Georges Matondo 30, Alain Azo 48 pen)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 15,000

Oct 6 - Belle Vue - Af Chp qual
MAURITIUS 1 (Robert Rateau 75)
MALAWI 2 (Bob Mpinganjira 29, France Jonas og 90)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,000

Oct 6 - Addis Ababa - Af Chp qual
ETHIOPIA 1 (Elias Juhar 3)
SENEGAL 2 (Hanti Ibrahim 17, Taifa al-Assne 36)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 25,000

Oct 6 - Windhoek - Af Chp qual
NAMIBIA 1
KENYA 0
Att: 15,000

Oct 6 - Khartoum - Af Chp qual
SUDAN 0
ZIMBABWE 3
Att: 25,000

Oct 6 - Lome - Af Chp qual
TOGO 2 (Salu Tadju 17, Abalo Dosseh 57)
TANZANIA 1 (Lazaro Samieh 72)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000

Oct 6 - Tunis - Af Chp qual
TUNISIA 2 (Sami Trabelsi 29, Skander Soyah 69)
SIERRA LEONE 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000

Oct 6 - Lusaka - Af Chp qual
ZAMBIA 1 (Kenneth Malitoli 4)
MOZAMBIQUE 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000

Oct 6 - Kinshasa - Af Chp qual
ZAIRE 0
LIBERIA 0
Att: 75,000

Oct 6 - Toftir - WC qual
FAROE ISLANDS 1 (Moeller 26)
YUGOSLAVIA 8 (Milosevic 7, 36, 45, Jokanovic 10, 57, Mijatovic 30, Jugovic 68, Stojkovic 90)
HT: 1-5. **Att:** 1,017. **Ref:** Irwin (NI)
Faroes: Knudsen - Johansen, Rasmussen, Oli Johannesen, J K Hansen (E Hansen), A F Hansen, A Jonsson (Nolsoe), Moller, A Morkore, Dam, J Johnsson, Petersen.
Yugoslavia: Kocic - Brnovic, Vidakovic (Djorovic), Jokanovic, Djukic, Jugovic, Stojkovic, Savljevic, Mihajlovic, Savicevic (Nadj), Milosevic (Drobnjak).

Oct 6 - Helsinki - WC qual
FINLAND 2 (Sumiala 40 pen, Kolkka 74)
SWITZERLAND 3 (Lombardo 14, Sforza 34, Murat Yakin 53)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 7,217. **Ref:** Orrasson (Ice)
Finland: Niemi - Hyhtamaki, Rissanen, Hyrylainen, Suominen, Lindberg (Kolkka 38), Gronlund, Koskinen, Myyry, Sumiala (Hyypia 81), Vanhala.
Switzerland: Pascolo - Haas, Vega, Henchoz, Walker, Lombardo, Yakin, Sforza, Vogel (Wicky 89), Kunz (Knup 77), Chapuisat (Bonvin 86).

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8

Oct 8 - Bologna, Italy - WC qual
BOSNIA 1 (Salihamidzic 25)
CROATIA 4 (Bilic 14, Vlaovic 32, Boksic 63, 84)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Ouzounov (Bul)
Bosnia: Omerovic - Sabic (Begic 53), Besirevic, Konjic (Pintul 69), Katana, Geca, Smajic, Bazdarevic, Bolic, Teljigovic (Halilovic 62), Salihamidzic.
Croatia: Ladic - Jurcevic (Simic 43), Jarni, Soldo, Jerkan, Bilic (Mamic 83), Asanovic, Vlaovic (Cvitanovic 87), Suker, Boban, Boksic.

Oct 8 - Luxembourg - WC qual
LUXEMBOURG 1 (Langers 20)
BULGARIA 2 (Balakov 14 pen, Kostadinov 37)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 3,800. **Ref:** Kollari (Alb)
Luxembourg: Koch - Vanek, Deville, Birsens, Strasser, Saibene (Thill 81), Hellers, Weis, Langers, Cardoni (Theis 28), Posing (Ganser 46).
Bulgaria: Mihailov - Antonov (Vassilev* 46), Ivanov, Tsvetanov, Kishishev, Yankov, Kostadinov, Hristov (Vidolov 46), Lechkov, Balakov, Ivanov (Borimirov 61).
** = Vassilev sent off, 59min.*

Oct 8 - Montevideo - WC qual
URUGUAY 1 (Pena og 62)
BOLIVIA 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 67,500. **Ref:** Borgosano (Ven)
Uruguay: Siboldi - Sanguinetti, Herrera, Montero, Meendez, Cedres, Saralegui (A Gutierrez 81), Poyet (Romero 61), Francescoli, Otero (Bengoechea 79), Fonseca.
Bolivia: Trucco - S Castillo*, Sandy, Pena, Cristaldo, Oscar Sanchez, Soria (Tufino 34), Baldivieso (Coimbra 69), Melgar, Moreno, Ramiro Castillo.
** = S Castillo sent off, 79min.*

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9

Oct 9 - San Cristobal - WC qual
VENEZUELA 2 (Savarese 7, Dudamel 87)
ARGENTINA 5 (Ortega 35, Sorin 69, 88, Simeone 77, Albornoz 91)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Dluzniewsky (Uru)
Venezuela: R Dudamel - McIntosh, L Gonzalez, W Gonzalez, Miranda (Garcia 73), Savarese, S Hernandez, Vera, F Hernandez (Urdaneta 43), Moran, Guerra (Filosa 46).
Argentina: Cavallero - H Diaz, R Ayala, Berizzo, Sorin, Simeone (Molina 88), Almeida, Albornoz, Morales, Ortega (C Lopez 88), Batistuta.

Oct 9 - Asuncion - WC qual
PARAGUAY 2 (Gamarra 24, Rivarola 63)
CHILE 1 (Margas 22)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)
Paraguay: Chilavert - Ayala, Rivarola, Gamarra, Arce, Acuna, Enciso (Baez 65), Struway, Caballero (Rojas 46), Benitez, Cardozo (Alcarez 68).
Chile: Ramirez - Reyes, Fuentes, Margas (Estay 80), Castaneda, Miranda, Musrri, Cornejo, Contreras (Rosenthal 55), Zamorano, Vergara (Goldberg 75).

Oct 9 - Tirana - WC qual
ALBANIA 0
PORTUGAL 3 (Luis Figo 11, Helder 77, Rui Costa 89)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Sarvan (Tur)
Albania: Strakosha - Dema (Kushta 46), Abazi (Malko 83), Xhumba, Vata, Lekbello, Bozgo, Kola, Kacaj, Rraklli, Millo (Paco 78).
Portugal: Vitor Baia - Secretario, Paulinho Santos, Oceano (Jose Taira Pereira 85), Fernando Couto, Helder, Luis Figo (Nuno Capucho 88), Joao Pinto, Sa Pinto, Rui Costa, Folha (Paulo Bento 63).

Oct 9 - Yerevan - WC qual
ARMENIA 1 (Mikaeljan 85)
GERMANY 5 (Hassler 20, 39, Klinsmann 26, Bobic 69, Kuntz 81)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Collina (Ita)
Armenia: Berezovsky - M Ter-Zakaryan, Hovsepian, Sukiasyan, Khachaturyan, Hovanesyan (H Ter-Petrosyan 46), Vartanyan (Minosyan 75), Tonoyan (Avetisyan 46), Mikhitaryan, Mikaelyan, Assaduryan.
Germany: Kopke - Passlack, Reuter, Kohler, Babbel, Eilts, Bode (Kuntz 73), Scholl, Hassler (Tarnat 75), Klinsmann, Bierhoff (Bobic 64).

Oct 9 - Minsk - WC qual
BELARUS 1 (Makovsky 79)
LATVIA 1 (Zemlitsky 16)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Kvarastskhelia (Geo)
Belarus: Shantalosov - Gurenko, Ostrovsky, Shtanyuk, Bezmen, Orlovsky, Kulchiy, Chernyavsky (Vergeichik 90), Maleyev, Makovsky, Kachuro (Vyazhevich 60).
Latvia: Karavajevs - Troitckis, Astafjevs, Zemlinskis, Sevljakovs (Zakresevskis 64), Stepanovs, Ivanovs, Bleidelis, Rinkus (Bulders 67), Zeiberlins (Babicevs 46), Pahaks.

Oct 9 - Quito - WC qual
ECUADOR 0
COLOMBIA 1 (Asprilla 72)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Elizondo (Arg)
Ecuador: Morales - Rivera, Montano, Tenorio, Capurro, Carabali, I Hurtado (Obregon 62), Delgado, Aguinaga, Gilson de Souza (Fernandez 70), E Hurtado.
Colombia: Mondragon - Galeano, Bermudez, Lopez, Cabrera, Alvarez, Serna, Valderrama, Rincon (De Avila 61), Aristizabal (Lozano 61), F Asprilla.

Oct 9 - Prague - WC qual
CZECH REPUBLIC 0
SPAIN 0
Att: 19,223. **Ref:** Frisk (Swe)
Czech Rep: Srnicek - Latal, Suchoparek, Nedved (Frydek 86), Kadlec, Hornak, Nemec, Poborsky (Smicer 58), Kuka, Berger, Bejbl.
Spain: Zubizarreta - Abelardo, Sergi, Alkorta, Nadal, Hierro, Raul, Luis Enrique, Amor (Urzaiz 76), Guerrero (Guardiola 52), Alfonso (Rios 73).

Oct 9 - Copenhagen - WC qual
DENMARK 2 (Zagorakis 25 og, B Laudrup 50)
GREECE 1 (Donis 35)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 40,226. **Ref:** Durcan (Sco)
Denmark: Schmeichel - Helveg, Rieper, J Hogh, Laursen, P Nielsen (Goldbaek 55), A Nielsen, Thomsen, P Moller (S Andersen 86), M Laudrup (Schjonberg 75), B Laudrup.
Greece: Atmatsidis - Efstratios, Kasapis, Ouzounnidis, Kallitzakis, Ntampizas, Zagorakis (Konstantinidis 64), Nicolaidis, Lima (Alexandris 59), Tsiartas (Niniadis 75), Donis.

Oct 9 - Wembley - WC qual
ENGLAND 2 (Shearer 24, 37)
POLAND 1 (Citko 6)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 74,663. **Ref:** Krug (Ger)
England: Seaman - G Neville, Pearce, Ince, Southgate (Pallister 52), Hinchcliffe, Beckham, Gascoigne, Shearer, Ferdinand, McManaman.
Poland: Wozniak - Michalski, Wojtala, Jozwiak, Zielinski, Waldoch, Hajto, Baluszynski, K Warzycha (Saganowski 75), Nowak, Citko.

Oct 9 - Tallinn - WC qual
ESTONIA v SCOTLAND
Abandoned on kick-off - Estonia did not turn up
Ref: Radoman (Yug)
Scotland: Goram - McNamara, Boyd, Calderwood, T McKinlay, Lambert, Collins, Burley, Dodds, Jackson, J McGinlay. **Subs:** Leighton, White, McAllister, Gemmill, B McKinlay, McCall, Freedman.

Oct 9 - Paris - intl friendly
FRANCE 4 (Blanc 33, Pedros 35, Djorkaeff 50, Pires 83)
TURKEY 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 28,611
France: Barthez - Karembeu, Goma, Blanc, Thuram (Djetou 76), Lamouchi (Candela 23), Deschamps, Zidane, Pedros (Gava 66), Djorkaeff, Loko (Pires 71).
Turkey: Rustu - Recep, Bulent, Alpay, Arif (Saffet Sancakli 46), Tolunay (Erkan 71), Ogun Celil (Serdar 60), Abdullah, Unal (Oguz 36), Hakan (Mehmet Ozdilek 63).

Oct 9 - Reykjavik - WC qual
ICELAND 0
ROMANIA 4 (D Moldovan 22, Hagi 60, Gheorghe Popescu 75, Petrescu 89)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 43,750. **Ref:** Detruche (Swi)
Iceland: B Kristinsson - Sigurdsson (Olafur Thordarsson 61), Th Gudjonsson, Sigurdur Jonsson, Adolfsson, R Kristinsson, Bergsson, Heimir Gudjonsson, Dadason (Helgi Sigurdsson 55), B Gunnlaugsson (A Gunnlaugsson 70), Sverrisson.
Romania: Stelea - Petrescu, Prodan, Dobos, Gilca, Gheorghe Popescu, Selymes, A Ilie (Filipescu 75), Moldovan (Dumitrescu 76), Hagi (Vladoiu 76), Munteanu.

Oct 9 - Tel Aviv - WC qual
ISRAEL 1 (Brumer 63)
RUSSIA 1 (Kolyvanov 79)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 36,000. **Ref:** Batta (Fra)
Israel: R Cohen - Halfon (Bennado 80), Amsalem, Hazan, Brumer, Shelah, Banin, Revivo, Berkowitz (Zohar 88), R Harazi (Rosenthal 76), Nimni.
Russia: Cherchesov - Minko, Nikiforov, Bushmanov (Radimov 66), Karpin, Tetradze, Onopko, Kanchelskis, Beschastnykh, Kolyvanov, Radchenko (Tikhonov 46).

Oct 9 - Perugia - WC qual
ITALY 1 (Ravanelli 42)
GEORGIA 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,146. **Ref:** Blareau (Bel)
Italy: Toldo - Pessotto, Maldini, Nesta, Ferrara, Carboni (Zola 17), Di Livio (Panucci 82), Conte (D Baggio 70), Casiraghi, Di Matteo, Ravanelli.
Georgia: Zoidze - Lobzhanidze, Tskhadadze, Sheila, Kudinov (Inalishvili 46), Gogichaishvili, Nemsadze, Kobeashvili, Ketsbaya, Kinkladze, Gogrichiani (Shota Arveladze 30).

Oct 9 - Vilnius - WC qual
LITHUANIA 2 (Jankauskas 44, Narbekovas 56)
LIECHTENSTEIN 1 (Zech 53)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Mamedeov (Aze)
Lithuania: Stauche - Tereshkinas, Sukristovas, Miknevicius, Vainoras, Shlekys, Zhutautas, Maciulevicius (Zhvingllas 57; Baltushnikas 82), Jankauskas, Skarbalius, Narbekovas.
Liechtenstein: Heeb - Ospelt, Telser, Hiltl, Hanselmann, P Beck, F Schadler (A Schadler 75), H Zech, Frick, D Hasler, S Hassler (Marxer 63).

Oct 9 - Oslo - WC qual
NORWAY 3 (Rekdal 83, 89, 90)
HUNGARY 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 22,480. **Ref:** Dallas (Sco)
Norway: Grodas - Haaland, R Johnsen, Berg, Bjornebye, Strandli (Ostenstad 83), Mykland, Leonhardsen, Solskjaer (H Flo 64), Rekdal, Bohinen.
Hungary: Safar - Mracsko, Banfi, N Nagy, Sebok, Halmai (Torma 87), Balog, Urban, Klausz, Nyilas (Illes 74), Dombi.

Oct 9 - Dublin - WC qual
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND 3 (McAteer 8, Cascarino 47, 70)
MACEDONIA 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 31,671. **Ref:** Fisker (Den)
Rep Ireland: A Kelly - Kenna, Irwin, Harte (Moore 86), Breen, Staunton, Townsend, McLoughlin (O'Brien 88), ONeill (Aldridge 82), McAteer, Cascarino.
Macedonia: Celeski - Milosavov, Beganovic (Sakiri 74), Sedloski, Nikolovski, Jovanovski, Josev, T Micevski, Histov, Ciric, Milosevski (Zaharievski 61).

Oct 9 - Serravalle - WC qual
SAN MARINO 0
BELGIUM 3 (Verheyen 11, Nilis 20, 47)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 1,353. **Ref:** Oganessian (Arm)
San Marino: F Gasperoni - L Gobbi, M Gennari, S Bacciocchi, L Gasperoni, Guerra, R Muccioli (Bianchi 68), M Mazza (Peverani 74), Montagna, Francini, Pasolini (Vannucci 53).
Belgium: De Wilde - Craseon, Medved, Renier, Leonard, Staelens, Schepens (Van Kerckhoven 62), Verheyen (Pierre 65), Degryse, Nilis, Luis Oliveira (De Bilde 80).

Oct 9 - Stockholm - WC qual
SWEDEN 0
AUSTRIA 1 (Herzog 12)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 36,859. **Ref:** Krondl (Cze)
Sweden: Ravelli - R Nilsson, P Andersson, Bjorklund, Blomqvist, Schwarz, Zetterberg, Ingesson (Mild 67), Thern, Dahlin (A Andersson 83), K Andersson (Larsson 42).
Austria: Konsel - Schopp (Hatz 77), Schottel, Pfeffer, Feiersinger, Heraf, Hutter, Wetl, Polster, Herzog, Stoger (Ramusch 71).

Oct 9 - San Jose - intl friendly
COSTA RICA 0
JAMAICA 0
Att: 12,044. **Ref:** Rodriguez (CR)
Costa Rica: Barrantes - Delgado (Wanchope 66), Wright, Gonzalez, Marin, Solis, Lopez, Myers, Soto (Gomez 72), Medford, Fonseca.
Jamaica: Barrett - Davis, Dixon (Thomas 64), Brown, Stewart (Goodickson 46), Messan, Cargill, Peterkin, Butler (Wright 46), Boyd (Davis 75), Lowe (Young 75).

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10

Oct 10 - Edmonton - WC qual
CANADA 2 (Bunbury 29, Peschisolido 54)
CUBA 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,000
Canada: Forrest - Watson, Yallop, Samuel, Miller, Hooper, Aunger, Radzinski, Mobolio (Dasovic 62), Peschisolido, Bunbury.
Cuba: Molina - Hernandez, Diaz, Gou, Cruzata (Martinez 56), Cruz, Mora, Bobadilla, Pedraza (Saez 77), Darcourt (More 65), Cebranco.

Oct 10 - Tokyo - J.League intl
JAPAN 1 (M Maezono 85)
J.LEAGUE WORLD XI 2 (Antonio Carlos 24, Bismark 66)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 40,067. **Ref:** Okada (Jap)
Japan: Doi (Shimokawa 45) - H Yanagimoto, Ihara, Saito, Tsunami (Sawanobori 45), Soma, Kitazawa, Kato (Ramos Rui 45), M Maezono, Jo (Hashiratani 62), Kazu Miura.
J.Lge World XI: Gilmar (Dida 77) - Buchwald, Antonio Carlos (Boli 46), Tsveiba, Jorginho, Dunga, Stojkovic (Schillaci 27), Cesar Sampaio, Zinho, Bismark (Wagner 69), Edison.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13

Oct 13 - Kobe - intl friendly
JAPAN 1 (Maezono 17)
TUNISIA 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Yaakob
Japan: Maekawa - H Yanagimoto, Ihara, Saito, Soma (Michiki 82), H Morishima, M Yamaguchi, Nanami (Sakai 76), M Maezono (Y Honda 67), Okano (Tanagi 45), Kazu Miura (Jo 76).
Tunisia: Zitouni - Thabet, M Trabelsi, Ben Ali, H Nouira, Sghaier, Zdiri, Kouki, Kriden (L Hanini 77), F Rouissi (Aloui 77), Limam.

Oct 13 - Edmonton - WC qual
CUBA 0
CANADA 2 (Peschisolido 16, Dasovic 79)
HT: 0-1. **HT:** 10,122. **Ref:** Mendizabal (Guat)
Cuba: Molina - Garcia, Julio Diaz (Cruzata 82), Khadafi Gou Gomez, Pedraza*, Mora, Martinez, Alvarez (Darcourt 61), Osmin Hernandez (Cruz 70), Cebranco, More.
** = Pedraza sent off, 78min.*
Canada: Forrest - Yallop*, Samuel, Miller, Radzinski (Fraser 71), Hooper, Bunbury, Peschisolido (Corazzin 46), Mobilio (Dasovic 46), Watson, Aunger.
** = Yallop sent off, 51min.*

Oct 13 - Kingstown - WC qual
ST VINCENT AND GRENADINES 1 (Chewitt 54)
HONDURAS 4 (Suazo 7, 62, Santamaria 23, 42)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 2,500
St Vincent: Andrews - Walker, John, Hendrickson, Harry, Forde, Huggins, Chewitt, Velox, Guy, Sam.
Honduras: Zapata - M Flores, Arzu, Castro, Membrana, Pineda, Santamaria, Guevara, Pavon, Suazo, Reneav.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15

Oct 15 - Muscat - Gulf Cooperation Council Cup
OMAN 0
SAUDI ARABIA 1
Att: 35,000

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16

Oct 16 - Muscat - Gulf Cooperation Council Cup
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 0
QATAR 1 (Ahmed Mubarak 12)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 3,500. **Ref:** Majasi Sidi (Mali)
UAE: Juma Rashid - Abdul Rahman Ibrahim, Abdul Rahman Mohammed, Ismail Rashid, Bakhit Saad (Ali Hasan, 65th), Adnan Talyani, Zuhair Bakhit, Tarek Bilal, Mohammed Ali Ahmed, Abdul Razak Ibrahim, Mohammed Obeid.
Qatar: Younes Ahmed - Jafal Rashid, Zamel Al Kawary, Adel Khamis, Mohammed Salem Al Enizi, Ahmed Mubarak, Abdul Aziz Hasan (Mahmoud Soufi 73), Adel Hasan, Juma Salem, Jassem Tamimi, Mubarak Mustafa (Abdul Nasser Ali 70).

Oct 16 - Oman - Gulf Cooperation Council Cup
KUWAIT 1 (Hussein Khodary 39)
BAHRAIN 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 3,500. **Ref:** Mohammed Al Sharif (SAr)
Kuwait: Falah Dabsha - Mohammed Benayan, Wael Suleiman, Bader Haji (Hamad Al Saleh 62), Ali Morwee, Khaled Shulaimy (Ayman Hussein 75), Abdullah Wabran (Osama Hussein 87), Fawaz Marzouk, Hussein Khudary, Issam Saad, Yousef Doukhy.
Bahrain: Hmoud Sultan - Abdul Razak Mohammed, Ghazi Kawary (Sami Haiky 74), Hameed Hasan, Khaled Al Dowsary, Ibrahim Issa (Mohammed Saleh 68), Murtada Mohammed, Khamis Eid, Ali Amer, Fayad Mahmoud, Khaled Jassem (Rashid Jamal 79).

Oct 16 - Mexico City - WC qual
MEXICO 2 (Zague 41, Hermosillo 53)
JAMAICA 1 (Boyd 79)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 100,000
Mexico: Campos - Pardo, Claudio Suarez, Davino, Ramon Ramirez, Alfaro (D Alvarez 73), Bernal, Garcia Aspe, Galindo (Luis Garcia 79), Hermosillo (Pelaez 85), Alves Zague.
Jamaica: Barrett - F Davis, Dixon, Brown (Harris 46), Stewart, Messan, Cargill, Whitmore (Peterkin 60), Wright (Butler 84), Boyd, Lowe.

Oct 16 - Teresena - intl friendly
BRAZIL 3 (Ronaldo 14, 45, 70)
LITHUANIA 1 (Buitkus 21)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 60,000
Brazil: Zetti - Ze Maria, Goncalves, Andre Cruz, Andre Luis (Ze Roberto 46, Mauro Silva, Flavio Conceicao, Leonardo, Djalminha, Donizete (Edmundo 46), Ronaldo.
Lithuania: Martinkenas - Vainoras, Miknevicius, Gvildys (Zhutautas), Poderis (Morinas), Buitkus, Sorolainus, Zhutautas, Kirilovas (Razanauskas 73), Preiksaitis, Maciulevicius.

Oct 16 - Lima - intl friendly
PERU 4 (Palacios 33, Olivares 67, Maldonado 73, Solano 83)
UNITED STATES 1 (Brose 44)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 8,019. **Ref:** Juan Luna (Bol)
Peru: Miranda - Reynoso, Olivares, Barco (Merengo 46), Solano, Jayo Legario, Serrano (Bazalar 75), Maldonado, Palacios (Jorge Soto 69), Saenz (Farfan 69), Carty.
US: Dodd - Benedetti (Corrales 79), Brose, Eck (Holocher 60), Flores (Leonetti 46), Harbour (Cosier 32), Ianni, Ibsen, Lewis, Lozanno, Martin.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18

Oct 18 - Muscat - GCC Cup
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 1 (Bakhit Saad 5)
BAHRAIN 1 (Mohammed Saleh 48)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** Abdullah Baaboud (Oman)
UAE: Juma Rashid - Abdul Rahman Ibrahim, Munzer Ali, Rahman Mohammed, Ismail Rashid, Bakhit Saad, Adnan Talyani, Zuhair Bakhit, Mohammed Ali Ahmed, Abdul Razak Ibrahim, Ali Hasan.
Bahrain: Hmoud Sultan - Abdul Razak Mohammed, Ghazi Kawary, Hameed Hasan, Khaled Al Dowsary, Mohammed Saleh, Murtada Mohammed, Khamis Eid, Ali Amer, Fayad Mahmoud, Khaled Jassem.

Oct 18 - Muscat - GCC Cup
OMAN 1 (Saeed Shabaan 7)
KUWAIT 2 (Abdullah Hamdan og 55, Hussein Khudary 80)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000
Oman: Juma Saleh - Adel Fayel, Dafer Daahy, Ahmed Khamis, Dawood Salem, Mohammed Khamis, Abdullah Hamdan, Saif Al Habsi, Salem Abdullah, Saeed Shaaban, Mohammed Akaak.
Kuwait: Falah Dabsha - Mohammed Benayan, Wael Suleiman, Hamad Al Saleh, Ali Morwee, Khaled Shulaimy, Abdullah Wabran, Osama Hussein, Fawaz Marzouk, Hussein Khudary, Issam Saad.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19

Oct 19 - Muscat - GCC Cup
QATAR 2 (Ahmed Mubarak 21, Abdel Khamis 83)
SAUDI ARABIA 2 (Ahmed Jamil 46, Sami Al Jaber 72)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Okada Masushi (Jpn)
Qatar: Younes Ahmed - Jafal Rashid, Zamel Al Kawary, Adel Khamis, Mohammed Salem Al Enizi, Ahmed Mubarak, Abdul Aziz Hasan, Adel Hasan, Juma Salem, Jassem Tamimi, Mubarak Mustafa.
S Arabia: Mohammed Al Duaeia - Mohammed Shiaya, Ahmed Jamil, Fahd Khulaiwy, Hussein Abdul Ghani, Fuad Anwar, Yousef Al Thunian, Ibrahim Mater, Sami Al Jaber, Obeid Al Dowsary, Khaled Musaed.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21

Oct 21 - Muscat - Gulf Council Cup
OMAN 0
QATAR 3 (Mahmoud Soufi 5, Mohammed Salem Al Enizi 20, 88)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 23,000
Oman: Juma Saleh - Adel Fayel, Aziz Naseeb, Saeed Shaban, Abdullah Hamdan, Saif Habsi, Hilal Hameed (Taki Mubarak, 46th), Ahmed Khamis (Mohammed Khamis 72nd), Salem Abdullah, Daoud Salem (Akram Mohammed, 73rd), Sulaiman Al Murr.
Qatar: Younes Ahmed - Jafal Rashid, Zamel Al Kawary, Adel Khamis (Abdul Aziz Salem, 68th), Mohammed Salem Al Enizi, Abdul Aziz Hasan, Adel Hasan, Jassem Tamimi (Abdul Nasser Ali, 55th), Mubarak Mustafa (Salah Mulla, 83rd), Waleed Bakhit, Mahmoud Soufi.

Oct 21 - Muscat - GCC Cup
SAUDI ARABIA 3
BAHRAIN 1
Att: 3,500.

Oct 21 - Tegucigalpa - Intl. friendly
HONDURAS 1 (Pavon 44)
EL SALVADOR 1 (Montes 64)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,711. **Ref:** Ramirez (Hon)
Honduras: Milton Flores (Cruz 46) - Zapata, Castro, Garcia, Membreno, J L Pineda (Richardson Smith 46), Santamaria (Fu 46), Guevara, Pavon (A Pineda 46), Bennett, Reneau (Nunez 46).
El Salvador: Guevara Mora - Osorio Mayen, Menjivar (Melendez 63), J Rodriguez, Iraheta Sanabria, Burgos, Cerritos (Quintanilla 70), Medrano, Lazo, Renderos Iraheta (Montes 46).

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22

Oct 22 - Muscat - GCC Cup
KUWAIT 1
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 2
Att: 5,000

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23

Oct 23 - Bratislava - WC qual
SLOVAKIA 3 (Dubrovsky 20, Jancula 44, Simon 57 pen)
FAROE ISLANDS 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,400. **Ref:** Prolic (Bos)
Slovakia: Vencel - Zeman, Karhan (Kozak 84), Tomaschek, Kinder, Tittel, Balis (Kozlej 68), Simon, Jancula, Dubovsky, Timko (Uljaky 68).
Faroes: Knudsen - Oli Johannesen, H Jarnskor, A Hansen, O Hansen, A Morkore, J Johnsson, Dam (Ennigard 63), Mueller, T Jonsson (Arge 46), J Petersen (Eliasen 35).

Oct 23 - Oakland, Calif - intl friendly
MEXICO 0
ECUADOR 1 (Carabali 60)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 27,528
Mexico: Campos (Rios 46) - Romero, J Sanchez, Gomez, Pardo, Padilla (Palencia 77), Coyote (Medina 74), Ramon Ramirez, Alves Zague (Mascareno 46), Hermosillo (Jauregui 46), Alvarez.
Ecuador: Morales - Burbano (Mendez 55), Tenorio, Quinones, Mato, Gilson de Souza, J Diaz, Carabali, O de la Cruz, Delgado (Ordonez 71), Cubero.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24

Oct 24 - Muscat - GCC Cup
OMAN 0
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 0
Att: 5,000. **Ref:** Mohammed Sharif (SAr)
Oman: Juma Saleh - Adel Fayel, Ahmed Khamis (Rashid Abdullah 65), Mohammed Khamis, Abdullah Hamdan, Saif Al Habsi, Saeed Shaaban, Akram Harbeesh, Suleiman Murr, Tayeb Abdul Noor, Aziz Naseeb.
UAE: Juma Rashid - Abdul Rahman Mohammed, Ismail Rashid, Bakhit Saad, Zuhair Bakhit, Mohammed Ali, Hasan Saeed, Hasan Suheil (Sultan Rashid 76), Abdul Rahman Ibrahim (Abdul Rahman Haddad 78), Ali Hasan, Abdul Aziz Mohammed.

Oct 24 - Muscat - GCC Cup
KUWAIT 1 (Hamad Al Saleh 3)
SAUDI ARABIA 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Saeed Abdullah (UAE)
Kuwait: Khaled Fadly - Wael Suleiman, Bader Haji (Ahmed Mousa 69), Hamad Al Saleh (Bashar Abdullah 65), Ayman Hussein, Abdullah Wabran, Fawaz Marzouk, Abdul Aziz Hindy, Osama Hussein, Issam Saad, Yousef Doukhy.
S Arabia: Mohammed Duaiea - Khaled Musaid, Hussein Abdul Ghani, Yousef Thunian, Fahd Muhalel, Sami Jaber (Muhaisen Jamaan 60), Fuad Anwar, Mohammed Shalia (Obaid Dousary 55), Ibrahim Matar, Ahmed Jamil, Mohammed Khulaiwy.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25

Oct 25 - Guatemala City - WC qual
GUATEMALA v TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO – *postponed*

Oct 25 - Muscat - GCC Cup
BAHRAIN 1
QATAR 2
Att: 6,500

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

Oct 16 - San Pedro Sula - WC qual
HONDURAS 0
JAMAICA 0
Att: 16,000
Honduras: Milton Flores - Zapata, Arzu (Bennett 84), Richardson Smith, Membreno, J L Pineda, A Pineda, Guevara, Santamaria, Suazo (Nunez 53), Reneau (Pavon 69).
Jamaica: Barrett - Davis, Dixon, Brown, Goodison, Messan, Cargill, Peterkin (Harris 55), Wright (Butler 57), Boyd, Lowe (McGreath 64).

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

Oct 27 - Panama City - WC qual
PANAMA 0
CANADA 0
Att: 10,000. **Ref:** Batres (Guat)
Panama: James - Botello, Delgado, Poyatos, Villanueva, Rodriguez (Atencio 85), Cubillas, Guevara, Piggot (Diaz 64), Julio Dely Valdes, Jorge Dely Valdes.
Canada: Forrest - Watson, Samuel, Miller, Fraser, Hooper, Aunger (Corrazin 74), Radzinski, Dasovic (Aguiar 51), Peschisolido, Bunbury (Dolan 83).

Oct 27 - Papeete - Oceania Confed Cup 1st leg
TAHITI 0
AUSTRALIA 6 (Tapai 5, Trimboli 20, Trajanovski 25, 28, 44, 89)
HT: 0-5. **Att:** 6,500. **Ref:** Tasker.
Australia: Kalac - Ivanovic, Tobin, Popovic, Blagojevic, Edwards, Hooker (Enes), Tapai (Wade), Foster, Trajanovski, Trimboli.

Oct 27 - Muscat - GCC Cup
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 2 (Mohammed Ali 38, 89)
SAUDI ARABIA 2 (Khaled Timawy 80 pen, 85)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Saad Kameel (Kuw)
UAE: Juma Rashid, Ismail Rashid, Sultan Rashid Hasan Suheil, Mohammed Ali, Hasan Saeed, Hasan Saeed, Jassem Toufic, Abdul Rahman Ibrahim, Abdul Rahman Haddad, Ali Hasan.
Saudi Arabia: Hussein Sadek, Obaid Dossary, Khaled Musaid, Ibrahim Matter, Khaled Timawy, Hamzah Idrees, Khaled Rasheed, Fahd Khilaiwy, Ahmed Jamil, Mohammed Shiliya, Khamis Owairan.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28

Oct 28 - Muscat - Gulf Council Cooperation Cup
OMAN 1
BAHRAIN 1
Att: 10,000

Oct 28 -'Muscat - GCC Cup
QATAR 1
KUWAIT 2
Att: 10,000

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kuwait	5	4	0	1	7	4	12
Qatar	5	3	1	1	9	5	10
S Arabia	5	2	2	1	8	6	8
UAE	5	1	3	1	5	5	6
Bahrain	5	0	2	3	4	8	2
Oman	5	0	2	3	2	7	2

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30

Oct 31 - Mexico City - WC qual
MEXICO 5 (Benjamin Galindo 20, 28 pen, Zague 48, Hermosillo 72, Walker og 81)
ST VINCENT 1 (Velox 88)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 40,000

SOUTH AMERICAN SUPER CUP

FIRST ROUND GROUP

AUG 28 - BUENOS AIRES (ARG)

ARGENTINOS JUNIORS (Arg) 0
RACING CLUB (Arg) 1 (Capria 73)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** J. Castrilli (Arg)
Argentinos: R. Sanzotti, D. Marra, J. Fernandez, M. Levy, D. Placente, P. Rodriguez, D. Markic, C. Zermatten (G. Caiafa 84), L. Mas, J. Quinteros, M. Aquirre (L. Gatti 65)
Racing: I. Gonzalez (D. Rodriguez 81), M. Navas, C. Galvan, J. Sarrizuela, C. MacAllister, H. Gonzalez (E. Fuertes 46), F. Quiroz, G. Chacoma (D. Faciutto 31), R. Capria, M. Delgado, M. Vilallonga.

SEP 11 - BUENOS AIRES (ARG)

BOCA JUNIORS (Arg) 1 (Carrario 90)
RACING CLUB (Arg) 1 (Quiroz 9)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** R. Ruscio (Arg).
Boca Juniors: Navarro Montoya, Vivas, Lorenzo (Doliberg 55), Fabbri, Pompei, Toresani (Basualdo 55), Peralta (Latorre 28), Cagna, Cedres, Carrario, Martinez.
Racing Club: I. Gonzalez, Capurro (Navas 46), Brusco, Galvan, Ubeda, Michelini, quiroz, Capria, Centeno (Facciutto 76), Vilallonga (Delgado 63), Fuertes.

SEPT 25 - BUENOS AIRES (ARG)

BOCA JUNIORS (Arg) 3 (Carrario 61, Cedres 69, St Martinez 85)
ARGENTINOS JUNIORS (Arg) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** R. Pascualino (Arg). **Att:** 4,000
Boca Juniors: C. Navarro Montoy, F. Caceres, N. Lorenzo, C. Dollberg, A. Matellan, J. Toresani, J. Basualdo (D. Cagna 46), R. Pompei, D. Latorre (G. Cedres 46), S. Martinez, S. Carrario.
Argentinos Juniors: A. Lanari, D. Marra, R. Schiavi, S. Luque, L. Asencio, D. Markic, L. Vespa, L. Mas (C. Zermatten 46), P. Rodriguez (sent off 70), J. Quinteros, M. Trapasso (M. Aguirre).

OCT 4 - BUENOS AIRES (ARG)

RACING CLUB (Arg) 0
BOCA JUNIORS (Arg) 0
Att: 20,000
Racing: Gonzalez, Navas, Brusco, Serrizuela, Ubeda, Michelini, Quiroz, Centenor (Graf 68), Crespin, Vilallonga (G. Ortiz 76), Saavedra.
Boca Juniors: Navarro Montoya, Vivas, Caceres, Fabbri, Matellan, Toresani, J. Basualdo, Latorre, Pompei, Cedres, S. Martinez.

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Juniors	4	2	2	0	6	1	8
Racing Club	4	1	3	0	3	1	6
Argentinos Jnrs	4	0	1	3	0	7	1

(Boca Juniors qualify for 2nd rnd)

FIRST ROUND, FIRST LEG

SEPT 11 - BUENOS AIRES (ARG)

RIVER PLATE (Arg) 2 (Cruz 13, Monserrat 34)
NACIONAL (Col) 2 (Mosquera, Trellez 57)
HT: 2-1. **Ref:** M. Rezende (Bra).
River Plate: Burgos, Altamirano (sent off 75), C. Ayala, Berizzo, Sorin, Monserrat (Gallardo 62), Astrada, Berti (Escudero 46), Orega, Francescoli, Cruz.
Nacional: Higuita, Santa, Perea, Foronda, Mosquera, Gaviria, Serna (sent off 89), Grisales, A. Garcia (M. Asprilla 79), Trellez (sent off 75), Angel.

SEPT 11 - AVELLANEDA (ARG)

INDEPENDIENTE (Arg) 0
FLAMENGO (Bra) 0
Ref: J. Nieves (Uru)
Independiente: Mondragon, J. Martinez, Rotchen, Arzeno, C. Diaz, Acuna, Cascini, Molina, Burruchaga (Casartelli 70), Guerrero, Calderon.
Flamengo: Ze Carlos, Rivera, Fabianho, Ronaldao, Gilberto, Marcio Costa, Mancuso, Favio Moraoes, Marques, Bebeto, Savio (Iranildo 86).

SEPT 11 - MONTEVIDEO (URU)

PENAROL (Uru) 1 (Aguirregaray 44)
SANTOS (Bra) 2 (Jemelli 57, Robert 88)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** R. Gimenez (Arg). **Att:** 25,000
Penarol: S. Navarro, O. Aguirregaray (sent off 74), r. Lima, N. Olveire, W. Tais, E. Adinolfi (R. Pereira), N. Rotundo, G. De los Santos, P. Bengoschea, C. Aquilara, A Pacheco (H. Sosa).
Santos: Sergio, Anderson, Jean, Narciso, Marcos Adriano, Carlinhos (Ronaldo), Marcos Asunao, Bahiano, Alexandre (Robert), Camanduesi, Jamelli.

SEPT 12 - ASUNCION (PAR)

OLIMPIA (Par) 2 (F. Silvera 41, F. Torres 68)
SAO PAULO (Bra) 1 (Favio 76)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** J. Castrilli (Arg)
Olimpia: J. Battaglia, V. Caceres, J. Franco, M.

Gomez, S. Suarez, H. Bourdier, V. Sanabria (sent off), G. Sotelo, F. Silvera, F. Torres, M. Caballero.
Sao Paulo: Zetti, Claudio, Valber, Bordon, Serginho, Axel, Edenilson (69 Favio), Capone, Denilson (sent off), Muller, Aristizabal.

SEPT 12 - LA PLATA (ARG)

ESTUDIANTES DE LA PLATA (Arg) 2 (Furiga, Palermo 44)
COLO COLO (Chile) 4 (Sierra, Zapata og 50, Vergara 63, Tapia 64)
HT: 2-1. **Ref:** F. Benegas (Par).
Estudiantes: Bossio, Zapata, Ramos (sent off 87), F. Veron (Quatrocchi 89), Gomez, Catan, Aguilar, Alegre (Lagrotyeria 68), Mazzuco (G. Cordoba 44), Furiga, Palermo.
Colo Colo: Arbiza, Fewrnandez, Reyes, Guevara, Henriquez, Espina, Sales, Arrue (Pereira 46), Sierra (Bartioiotto 46), Tepia, Vergara.

SEPT 17 - MONTEVIDEO (URU)

NACIONAL (Uru) 1 (J. Gonzalez 23)
CRUZEIRO (Bra) 1 (Ailton 33)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** E. Gonzalez (Par). **Att:** 15,000.
Nacional: C. Nicola, G. Badell, J. Cabrara (S. Ostolazo), A. Silva, J. Moran (A. Dominquez W. Cabrera), D. Tito, N. Abeidon, M. Parodi, A Recoba, O. Canebbio, J. Gonzalez (sent off 88).
Cruzeiro: Dida, Vitor (sent off 88), Gilmar, Celio Lucio, Ronaldo Luis, Donizetti, Ricardinho, Ailton, Palinha (Luiziao), Claison (sent off 10), Paulinho (Da Silva).

SEPT 18 - PORTO ALEGRE (BRA)

GREMIO (Bra) 3 (Saulo 30, Ares 44, Ailton 47)
VELEZ SARSFIELD (Arg) 3 (Camps 21, Moriggi 62, Mauro Galvao 65 og)
HT: 2-1. **Ref:** J. Matto (Uru). **Att:** 17,000
Gremio: Danrlei, Arca, Rivarolo, Mauro Galvao, Roger, Dinho (Emerson 87), Adilson, Ailton (Joao Antonio 68), Carlos Miguel, Paulo Nunes, Saulo.
Velez Sarsfield: Chilavert, Mendez, Sotomayor, Pellegrino, Cardozo Herrera, Gomez, Moriggi, Camps (Dominquez 75), Pandolfi (Hussin 67), Posse (Cordone 83).

OCT 3 - BELO HORIZONTE (BRA)

CRUZEIRO (Bra) 3 (Palinha pen 20, Paulinho 70, Fabinho 88)
NACIONAL (Uru) 1 (Fernandez og 55)
Ht: 1-0. **Ref:** R. Ruscio (Arg)
Cruzeiro: Dida, Macos Texeira, Gilmar, Celio Luc io, Ronaldo Luis, Fabinho, Richardinho, Donizete (Gelson Baresi), Palhinha, Paulinho McLaren (Da Silva), Ailton.
Nacional: Nicola, Badell, Cabrera (sent off 46), Jara, Dominquez, Abeijon, Tito, Parodi (Correa), Recoba, Fernandez (Canobbio), Barilko (Ostolaza).

FIRST ROUND - 2ND LEG

SEPT 18 - MEDELLIN (COL)

NACIONAL (Col) 2 (Angel 38, Perea 89)
RIVER PLATE (Arg) 1 (Rivarola 18)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** E. Gamboa (Chi). **Att:** 40,000.
Nacional: Higuita, Santa, Perea, Cordoba, Mosquera, Gaviria, Grisales (Morantes 24), Alverez, A. Garcia, Angel, Gallo (Arando 64).
River Plate: Bonano, H. Diaz, C. Ayala, Berizzo, Rivarola, Escudero, Monserrat, Gancedo, Berti (Astrada 46), Ortega (Burgos 30), Cruz (Salas 65).
Nacional won 4-3 on agg

SEPT 19 - AVELLANEDA (ARG)

ROUND-ROBIN GROUP WITH BOCA JUNIORS
RACING CLUB 0
ARGENTINOS JUNIORS 0
Ref: Elizondo (Arg)
Racing Club: I. Gonzalez, Capurro, Brusco, Ubeda, MacAllister (Navas 46), Michelini, Serrizuela, Centano (H. Gonzalez 65), Delgado, Fuertes (sent off 84), Vilallonga (Graff 46).
Argentinos Jnrs: Lanari, Marra, Schiavi, Levy, Asencio, Markick, Vespa (Rodriguez 65), Zermatten, Mas, Trapasso, Quinteros.

SEPT 19 - SAO PAULO (BRA)

SAO PAULO (Bra) 2 (Aristizabal, Serginho 86)
OLIMPIA (Par) 1 (Samaniego 87)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** J. De Rose (Uru).
Olimpia: Bateglia, Caceres, Gomez, Fernandez, Suarez (Samaniego), Sotelo, Jara (Esteche), Silveira, Bourdier, Torres (Zanabria), Caballero.
Sao Paulo: Zetti, Claudio (Belleti), Valber, Bordon, Serginho, Axel, Favio, Mello (Valdir), Djair, Andre, Aristizabal, Muller.
Agg: 3-3, Olimpia won 5-3 on pens

SEPT 25 - BRASILIA (BRA)

FLAMENGO (Bra) 1 (Fabio Baiano 39)
INDEPENDIENTE (Arg) 0
Ref: E. Zdluzniewski (Urug). **Att:** 19,000.
Flamengo wins 2-1 on agg
Flamengo: Ze Carlos, Rivera, Fabiano, Ronaldao, Gilberto, Marcio Costa, Mancuso, Fabio Bahiano (Iranildo), Marques, Bebeto, Savio.
Independiente: Mondragon, Martinez, Rotchen, Arzeno, Diaz (Calderon), Acuna (Morales), Carrizo (Cassini - sent off 68), Burruchaga, Molina, Usuriaga, Guerrero.

SEPT 26 - SAO PAULO (BRA)

SANTOS (Bra) 3 (Sandro 53, Vagner 64, Alessandre 77)
PENAROL (Uru) 0
Ref: J. Castrilli (Arg)
Santos won 5-1 on agg
Santos: Sergio, anderson, sandro, Narciso (Jean 84), Marcos Asuncao, Marcos Adriano, Carlinhos, Jamelli (Camanducaia 68), Vagner, Alessandro, Robert.
Penarol: Navarro, Gutierrez, Lima, Olveira, Tais, Adinolfi (sent off 55), R. Pereira, De los Santos, Bengoechea (Gonzalez 80), Pacheco (Rodriquez 80), Sosa (Rotundo 70).

OCT 2 - BUENOS AIRES (ARG)

VELEZ SARSFIELD (Arg) 1 (Bassedas 88)
GREMIO (Bra) 0
Ref: J. Nieves (Uru).
Velez Sarsfield won 1-0 on agg
Velez Sarsfield: Chilavert, Herrera, Mendez, Sotomayor, Cardozo, Husain, Gomez, Morigi (Cordone 81), Camps, Posse (Dominquez 89), Pandolfi (Bassedas 57).
Gremio: Danrlei, Arce, Rivarola, Luciano (Joao Antonio 77), Roger, Dinho, Emerson, Mauro Galvao, Carlos Miguel (Ailton 66), Paulo Nunes, Saulo (Ze Alsino 55).

OCT 4 - SANTIAGO (CHILE)

COLO COLO (Chi) 2 (Basax 46, 52)
ESTUDIANTES DE LA PLATA (Arg) 1 (Palermo 18)
Colo Colo won 6-3 on agg
Ref: J. Arana (Peru).
Colo Colo: Arbiza, Ferndez (Enriques 88), Reyes, Gonzalez, Guevara, Espina, Emerson Peryera, Sierra, Barticciotto, Vergara (M. Salas 53), Basay (Tapia 83).
Estudiantes: Bossio, Zapata, T. Gomewz, Quatrocchi, Biazotti, Catan (Romeo 80), Piotti, Aquilar (Furiga 83), G. Cordoba, Palermo, Muzzucco.

SECOND ROUND, 1ST LEG

OCT 16 - SAO JOSE DO RIO PRETO (BRA)

SANTOS (Bra) 2 (Jean 26, Jamelli 41)
NACIONAL (Col) 0
Ht: 2-0. H. Elizondo (Arg). **Att:** 3,200.
Santos: Edinho, Anderson, Jeen, Ronaldo, Marcoa Adriano, Marcos Assuncao, Carlinhos, Pea (Camanducaia), Vagner (Robert), Alessandro, Jamelli.
Nacional: Tuberquie, Ospina, Peres, Foronda, Mosquera, Alvarez (Arango), Serna, Gaviria, Morantes, Angel, Trellez.

OCT 16 - BUENOS AIRES (ARG)

VELEZ SARSFIELD (Arg) 3 (Chilavert 18, Camps 42, Bassedas 84)
OLIMPIA (Par) 0
Ht: 2-0. **Ref:** S. Marinho (Bra). **Att:** 30,000
Velez Sartsfield: J.L. Chilavert, M. Herrera, V. Sotomayor, M. Pellegrino, R. Cardozo, C. Husain, M. Gomez, C. Bassedas, G. Moriggi (S. Mendez 17), P. Camps (H. Banegas 87), M. Posse (C. Cordone 84).
Olimpia: J. Battaglia (R. Tavarelli 24), V. Caceres, H. Chamas, J. Franco, D. Caniza, A. Jara, F. Esteche, (M. Sanabria 70), G. Sotelo (A. Mendoza 57), V. Sanagria, H. Bourdier, F. Torres.

OCT 17 - BUENOS AIRES (ARG)

BOCA JUNIORS (Arg) 0
CRUSEIRO (Bra) 0
Ref: M. Sanchez (Chile).
Boca Juniors: Navarro Montoya, Vivas, Caceres, Fabbri, Matellan, Basualdo, Cagna (Toresani 79), Dolberg, Cedres (Pompei 66), Martinez (Carrario 46), Rambert.
Cruzeiro: Dida, Marcos Texeira, Galson, Gilmar, Ronaldo Luis, Donizete, Fabinho, Ricardinho, Palinha (Clelson 58), Ailton (Da Sila 77), Paulinho.

OCT 17 - RIO DE JANEIRO (BRA)

FLAMENGO (Bra) 1 (Junior Baiano 14)
COLO COLO (Chile) 1 (Ferrero 88)
Hr: 1-0. **Ref:** J. Nieves (Urug)
Flamengo: Ze Carlos, Rivera, Junior Baiano, Ronaldao, Gilberto, Marcio Costa (Iranildo), Mancuso, Nelio, Marques, Bebeto, Aloaio.
Colo colo: Arbiza, Henriquez, Reyes, Gonzalez, guevera, Espina, Pereira, Salas, Rubio (Sierra), Tapia (Ferrero), Avila (Barticciotto).

CONMEBOL CUP

FIRST ROUND - 1ST LEG

SEPT 11: COBRELOA (Chi) 3 ROSARIO CENTRAL (Arg) 2

SEPT 9: PORONGOS (Uru) 2 RIVER PLATE (Arg) 2.

SEPT 10: DEPORTIVO CALI (Col) 1 INTERNACIONAL P.A. (Bra) 1.

SEPT 11: DEPORTES TOLIMA (Col) 1 VASCO DA GAMA (Bra) 0.

SEPT 12: UNION TACHIRA (Ven) 2 INDEPENDIENTE SANTA FE (Col) 2, BOLIVAR (Bol) 1 LANUS (Arg) 0, ALIANZA LIMA (Peru) 2 EMELEC (Ecu) 1.

SEPT 19: GUARANI (Par) 3 FLUMINENSE (Bra) 1.

FIRST ROUND, 2ND LEG

SEPT 17: VASCO DA GAMA (Bra) 4 DEP TOLIMA (Col) 0 *(Vasco won 4-1 on agg).*

SEPT 18: EMELEC (Ecu) 2 ALIANZA LIMA (Peru) 1 *(agg: 3-3, Emelec won 4-3 on pens).*

SEPT 19: INDEPENDIENTE SANTA FE (Col) 3 UNION TACHIRA (Ven) 0 *(Ind. Sante Fe won 5-2 on agg)*

SEPT 19: LANUS (Arg) 4 BOLIVAR 1 (*Lanus won 4-2 on agg*).

SEPT 19: ROSARIO CENTRAL (Arg) 4 COBRELOA (Chile) 1 *(Rosario won 6-3 on agg).*

SEPT 19: RIVER PLATE (Uru) 6 PORONGOS (Uru) 0 *(River Plate won 8-2 on agg).*

OCT 2: FLUMINENSE (Bra) 2 GUARANI (Par) 2 *(Fluminense won 5-3 on agg)*

OCT 1:

PALMEIRAS (Bra) 3 BRAGANTINO (Bra) 0 *(Bragantino won 5-4 on agg)*

SECOND ROUND, 1ST LEG

(OCT 15-17)

ROSARIO CENTRAL (Arg) 4 RIVER PLATE (Uru) 0; GUARANI (Par) 0 LANUS (Arg) 2; EMELEC (Ecu) 2 VASCO DA GAMA (Bra) 0; INDEPENDIENTE SANTA FE (Col) 1 BRAGANTINO (Bra) 0

SECOND ROUND, 2ND LEG

(OCT 18)

RIVER PLATE (Uru) 0 ROSARIO CENTRAL (Arg) 0 *(Rosario Central won 4-0 on agg)*

COPA DE ORO

AUG 17 - FINAL

FLAMENGO (Bra) 3
SAO PAULO (Bra) 1.

MAJOR CLUB INTERNATIONALS

AUG 26: Universidad Catolica (Chile) 3 Tolima (Col) 0.
AUG 30: Boca Juniors (Arg) 1 Olimpia (Par) 1. Colo Colo (Chile) 2 Platense (Arg) 2.

AFRICAN CHAMPIONS CUP

QUARTER-FINALS

ORLANDO PIRATES 1 (Dumisa Ngobe 15 pen)
SHOOTING STARS 0

SHOOTING STARS 1 (Dotun Alatishe 55)
ORLANDO PIRATES 0
Agg: 1-1, Stars won 4-3 on pens

PETRO ATLETICO 1 (Abrao 56)
JS KABYLIE 1 (Hakim Medana 46)

JB KABYLIE 1 (Rezki Amrouche 26)
PETRO ATLETICO 0
JSK won 2-1 on agg

ZAMALEK 2
COD MEKNES 0

COD MEKNES 2 (Yousef El Mantih 27, Abdallah Belbakri 44)
ZAMALEK 2 (Tarek Mustafa 29, Ayman Mansour 83)
Zamalek won 4-2 on agg

CS SFAXIEN 5 (Skander Souayeh 2, Amor Ben Taher 20, Habib Tomisi 48, Mohamed Salah Meftah 64, Sami Trabelsi 82)
DIARAF DAKAR 0

DIARAF DAKAR 3 (Issa Aidara 14, Racine Diouf 29, 33)
CS SFAXIEN 1 (Swahel 1)
CS Sfaxien won 6-3 on agg

SEMI-FINALS

JB KABYLIE 1 (Dagno 51)
SHOOTING STARS 1 (Sam Pam 62)

SHOOTING STARS 1 (David Ogaga 78)
JB KABYLIE 0
Shooting Stars won 2-1 on agg

CS SFAXIEN 1 (Skander Souayeh 78 pen)
ZAMALEK 0

ZAMALEK 1 (Mohamed Sabri 19 pen)
CS SFAXIEN 0
Agg: 1-1, Zamalek won 4-3 on pens

CUP-WINNERS CUP

QUARTER-FINALS

CR BELOUIZDAD walkover v
PRETORIA CITY withdraw

FUS RABAT 0
ARAB CONTRACTORS 0

ARAB CONTRACTORS 1 (Mohamed Ouda 11)
FUS RABAT 0
Contractors won 1-0 on agg

SODIGRAF 2 (Mbayo Kibemba 47, Kisombe Mundaba 66)
KATSINA UNITED 0

KATSINA UNITED 0
SODIGRAF 0
Sodigraf won 2-0 on agg

CANON YAOUNDE 0
COSTA DO SOL 0

COSTA DO SOL 2 (Sardinha 5, Comboio 86)
CANON YAOUNDE 2 (Njangue 4, Essono 76)
Agg: 2-2, Canon won on away goals

SEMI-FINALS

CR BELOUIZDAD 1 (Badji 52)
SODIGRAF 1 (Makita 25)

SODIGRAF 1 (Mbuilua Tondelwa 89)
CR BELOUIZDAD 0
Sodigraf won 2-1 on agg

ARAB CONTRACTORS 2 (Nahas 36, Achour 46)
CANON YAOUNDE 1 (Essono 63)

CANON YAOUNDE 1 (Jupiter Nangwe 85 pen)
ARAB CONTRACTORS 1 (Taher El Mahas 55)
Arab Contractors won 3-2 on agg

CAF CUP

QUARTER-FINALS

STADE TAMPONNAISE 0
KAWKAB MARRAKESH 0

KAWBAB MARRAKESH 1 (Samir 73)
STADE TAMPONNAISE 0
Kawkab won 1-0 on agg

KENYA BREWERIES 1 (Patrick Omondi 15)
PORTS AUTHORITY 0

PORTS AUTHORITY 1
KENYA BREWERIES 0
Agg: 1-1, Breweries won 4-2 on agg

ETOILE SAHEL 4 (Imed Ben Younes 6 pen, Riadh Jalassi 19, Zoubier Beya 21, Samir Raouene 88)
UNISPORT BAFAN 1 (Imau 75)

UNISPORT BAFAN 1 (Simamo 89)
ETOILE DU SAHEL 0
ESS won 4-2 on agg

MOULOUDA ORAN 2 (Chekih Benserga 43, Sabih Ali 46)
VITA CLUB 0

VITAL CLUB 2 (L Ioham 47, Luende 85)
MOULOUDA ORAN 0
Agg: 2-2, Vita won 3-1 on pens

SEMI-FINALS

ETOILE DU SAHEL 2 (Riadh Jelassi 9, Imed Ben Younes 67)
VITA CLUB 0

VITA CLUB 2 (L Mulangana 2 pen, B Lisani 73)
ETOILE DU SAHEL 1 (Zoubier Beya 44)
Etoile du Sahel won 3-2 on agg

KAWKAB MARRAKESH 4 (Badraoui 9, 30, 56 pen, El Amrani 19)
KENYA BREWERIES 1 (George Omondi 65)

KENYA BREWERIES 1 (George Maina 89)
KAWKAB MARRAKESH 0
Kawkab won 4-2 on agg

UNITED STATES

MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

CONFERENCE SEMI-FINALS *(BEST OF THREE)*

24.09.96	NY/NJ v Washington	2-2
	NY/NJ won 6-5 in shoot-out	
25.09.96	Tampa Bay v Columbus	2-0
26.09.96	Kansas City v Dallas	3-2
26.09.96	San Jose v Los Angeles	1-0
27.09.96	Washington v NY/NJ	1-0
28.09.96	Columbus v Tampa Bay	2-1
29.09.96	Los Angeles v San Jose	2-0
29.09.96	Dallas v Kansas City	2-1
02.10.96	Washington v NY/NJ	2-1
	Washington win series 2-1	
02.10.96	Tampa Bay v Columbus	4-1
	Tampa Bay win series 2-1	
02.10.96	Dallas v Kansas City	2-2
	Kansas won 3-2 in shoot-out, win series 2-1	
02.10.96	Los Angeles v San Jose	2-0
	LA win series 2-1	

CONFERENCE FINALS

10.10.96	Washington v Tampa Bay	4-1
10.10.96	Los Angeles v Kansas City	2-1
12.10.96	Tampa Bay v Washington	1-2
	Washington win series 2-0	
13.10.96	Kansas City v Los Angeles	1-1
	LA win 3-1 in shoot-out, win series 2-0	

MLS CUP 96

20.10.96	Washington v Los Angeles	3-2
	on golden goal	

EUROPE

(15 teams qualify)
(France qualify as hosts)
(Group winners qualify)
(Best runner-up qualifies)
(Remaining runners-up enter play-offs)

GROUP 1

24.04.96	Greece v Slovenia	2-0
01.09.96	Greece v Bosnia	3-0
01.09.96	Slovenia v Denmark	0-2
09.10.96	Denmark v Greece	2-1
09.10.96	Bosnia v Croatia	4-1
09.11.96	Slovenia v Bosnia	
10.11.96	Croatia v Greece	
29.03.97	Croatia v Denmark	
02.04.97	Croatia v Slovenia	
02.04.97	Bosnia v Greece	
30.04.97	Denmark v Slovenia	
30.04.97	Greece v Croatia	
08.06.97	Denmark v Bosnia	
20.08.97	Bosnia v Denmark	
06.09.97	Croatia v Bosnia	
06.09.97	Slovenia v Greece	
10.09.97	Denmark v Croatia	
10.09.97	Bosnia v Slovenia	
11.10.97	Greece v Denmark	
11.10.97	Slovenia v Croatia	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Greece	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
Denmark	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Croatia	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
Slovenia	2	0	0	2	0	4	0
Bosnia	2	0	0	2	1	7	0

GROUP 2

01.09.96	Moldova v England	0-3
05.10.96	Moldova v Italy	1-3
09.10.96	Italy v Georgia	1-0
09.10.96	England v Poland	2-1
09.11.96	Georgia v England	
10.11.96	Poland v Moldova	
12.02.97	England v Italy	
29.03.97	Italy v Moldova	
02.04.97	Poland v Italy	
30.04.97	England v Georgia	
30.04.97	Italy v Poland	
31.05.97	Poland v England	
07.07.97	Georgia v Moldova	
14.07.97	Poland v Georgia	
10.09.97	England v Moldova	
10.09.97	Georgia v Italy	
24.09.97	Moldova v Georgia	
07.10.97	Moldova v Poland	
11.11.97	Italy v England	
11.11.97	Georgia v Poland	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
Italy	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Georgia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Poland	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Moldova	2	0	0	2	1	6	0

GROUP 3

02.06.96	Norway v Azerbaijan	5-0
31.08.96	Azerbaijan v Switzerland	1-0
01.09.96	Hungary v Finland	1-0
06.10.96	Finland v Switzerland	2-3
09.10.96	Norway v Hungary	3-0
10.11.96	Switzerland v Norway	
10.11.96	Azerbaijan v Hungary	
02.04.97	Azerbaijan v Finland	
30.04.97	Norway v Finland	
30.04.97	Switzerland v Hungary	
08.06.97	Finland v Azerbaijan	
08.06.97	Hungary v Norway	
20.08.97	Finland v Norway	
20.08.97	Hungary v Switzerland	
06.09.97	Switzerland v Finland	
06.09.97	Azerbaijan v Norway	
10.09.97	Hungary v Azerbaijan	
10.09.97	Norway v Switzerland	
11.10.97	Finland v Hungary	
11.10.97	Switzerland v Azerbaijan	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	2	2	0	0	8	0	6
Switzerland	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Hungary	2	1	0	1	1	3	3
Azerbaijan	2	1	0	1	1	5	3
Finland	2	0	0	2	2	4	0

GROUP 4

01.06.96	Sweden v Belarus	5-1
31.08.96	Austria v Scotland	0-0
31.08.96	Belarus v Estonia	1-0
01.09.96	Latvia v Sweden	1-2
05.10.96	Latvia v Scotland	0-2
05.10.96	Estonia v Belarus	1-0
09.10.96	Sweden v Austria	0-1
09.10.96	Estonia v Scotland	*Estonia did not appear at the match and have appealed against FIFA's decision to award 3-0 win to Scotland*
09.10.96	Belarus v Latvia	1
09.11.96	Austria v Latvia	
10.11.96	Scotland v Sweden	
29.03.97	Scotland v Estonia	
02.04.97	Scotland v Austria	
30.04.97	Austria v Estonia	
30.04.97	Sweden v Scotland	
30.04.97	Latvia v Belarus	
18.05.97	Estonia v Latvia	
08.06.97	Latvia v Austria	
08.06.97	Estonia v Sweden	
08.06.97	Belarus v Scotland	
20.08.97	Estonia v Austria	
20.08.97	Belarus v Sweden	
06.09.97	Austria v Sweden	
06.09.97	Latvia v Estonia	
06.09.97	Scotland v Belarus	
10.09.97	Belarus v Austria	
10.09.97	Sweden v Latvia	
11.10.97	Austria v Belarus	
11.10.97	Sweden v Estonia	
11.10.97	Scotland v Latvia	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	3	2	0	1	7	3	6
Scotland	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Austria	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Belarus	4	1	1	2	3	7	4
Estonia	2	1	0	1	1	1	3
Latvia	3	0	1	2	2	5	1

GROUP 5

01.09.96	Israel v Bulgaria	2-1
01.09.96	Russia v Cyprus	4-0
08.10.96	Luxembourg v Bulgaria	1-2
09.10.96	Israel v Russia	1-1
10.11.96	Cyprus v Israel	
10.11.96	Luxembourg v Russia	
14.12.96	Cyprus v Bulgaria	
15.12.96	Israel v Luxembourg	
29.03.97	Cyprus v Russia	
30.03.97	Luxembourg v Israel	
02.04.97	Bulgaria v Cyprus	
30.04.97	Israel v Cyprus	
30.04.97	Russia v Luxembourg	
08.06.97	Bulgaria v Luxembourg	
08.06.97	Russia v Israel	
20.08.97	Bulgaria v Israel	
07.09.97	Luxembourg v Cyprus	
10.09.97	Bulgaria v Russia	
11.10.97	Cyprus v Luxembourg	
11.10.97	Russia v Bulgaria	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Russia	2	1	1	0	5	1	4
Israel	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Bulgaria	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Luxembourg	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Cyprus	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

GROUP 6

24.04.96	Yugoslavia v Faroe Islands	3-1
02.06.96	Yugoslavia v Malta	6-0
31.08.96	Faroe Islands v Slovakia	1-2
04.09.96	Faroe Islands v Spain	2-6
18.09.96	Czech Republic v Malta	6-0
22.09.96	Slovakia v Malta	6-0
06.10.96	Faroe Islands v Yugoslavia	1-8
09.10.96	Czech Republic v Spain	0-0
23.10.96	Slovakia v Faroe Islands	3-0
10.11.96	Yugoslavia v Czech Republic	
13.11.96	Spain v Slovakia	
14.12.96	Spain v Yugoslavia	
18.12.96	Malta v Spain	
12.02.97	Spain v Malta	
31.03.97	Malta v Slovakia	
02.04.97	Czech Republic v Yugoslavia	
30.04.97	Yugoslavia v Spain	
30.04.97	Malta v Faroe Islands	
21.05.97	Slovakia v Czech Republic	
08.06.97	Yugoslavia v Slovakia	
08.06.97	Faroe Islands v Malta	
08.06.97	Spain v Czech Republic	
20.08.97	Czech Republic v Faroe Islands	
06.09.97	Faroe Islands v Czech Republic	
10.09.97	Slovakia v Yugoslavia	
24.09.97	Malta v Czech Republic	
24.09.97	Slovakia v Spain	
11.10.97	Malta v Yugoslavia	
11.10.97	Czech Republic v Slovakia	
11.10.97	Spain v Faroe Islands	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yugoslavia	3	3	0	0	17	2	9
Slovakia	3	3	0	0	11	1	9
Czech Rep	2	1	1	0	6	0	4
Spain	2	1	1	0	6	2	4
Faroe Islands	5	0	0	4	5	22	0
Malta	3	0	0	3	0	18	0

GROUP 7

02.06.96	San Marino v Wales	0-5
31.08.96	Wales v San Marino	6-0
31.08.96	Belgium v Turkey	2-1
6	Wales v Holland	1-3
6	San Marino v Belgium	0-3
6	Holland v Wales	
6	Turkey v San Marino	
6	Belgium v Holland	
2.96	Wales v Turkey	
7	Wales v Belgium	
7	Holland v San Marino	
7	Turkey v Holland	
7	San Marino v Holland	
7	Turkey v Belgium	
7	Belgium v San Marino	
7	Turkey v Wales	
7	Holland v Belgium	
7	San Marino v Turkey	
7	Holland v Turkey	
7	Belgium v Wales	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
	3	2	0	1	12	3	6
	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
rino	3	0	0	3	0	14	0

8

	Macedonia v Liechtenstein	3-0
	Iceland v Macedonia	1-1
	Liechtenstein v Rep. Ireland	0-5
	Romania v Lithuania	3-0
	Lithuania v Iceland	2-0
	Iceland v Romania	0-4
	Rep. Ireland v Macedonia	3-0
	Lithuania v Liechtenstein	2-1
	Liechtenstein v Macedonia	
	Rep. Ireland v Iceland	
	Macedonia v Romania	
	Romania v Liechtenstein	
	Lithuania v Romania	
	Macedonia v Rep. Ireland	
	Romania v Rep. Ireland	
	Liechtenstein v Lithuania	
	Rep. Ireland v Liechtenstein	
	Macedonia v Iceland	
	Iceland v Lithuania	
	Liechtenstein v Iceland	
	Rep. Ireland v Lithuania	
	Romania v Macedonia	
	Liechtenstein v Romania	
	Iceland v Rep. Ireland	
	Lithuania v Macedonia	
	Romania v Iceland	
	Lithuania v Rep. Ireland	
	Rep. Ireland v Romania	
	Iceland v Liechtenstein	
	Macedonia v Lithuania	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
nd	2	2	0	0	8	0	6
	2	2	0	0	7	0	6
	3	2	0	1	4	4	6
a	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
	3	0	1	2	1	7	1
tein	3	0	0	3	1	10	0

9

	Northern Ireland v Ukraine	0-1
	Armenia v Portugal	0-0
	Northern Ireland v Armenia	1-1
	Ukraine v Portugal	2-1
	Armenia v Germany	1-5
	Albania v Portugal	0-3
	Germany v Northern Ireland	
	Portugal v Ukraine	
	Albania v Armenia	
	Northern Ireland v Albania	
	Portugal v Germany	
	Northern Ireland v Portugal	
	Albania v Ukraine	
	Albania v Germany	
	Ukraine v Northern Ireland	
	Germany v Ukraine	
	Armenia v Northern Ireland	
	Ukraine v Armenia	
	Portugal v Albania	
	Ukraine v Germany	
	Portugal v Armenia	
	Ukraine v Albania	
	Northern Ireland v Germany	
	Germany v Portugal	
	Armenia v Albania	
	Germany v Armenia	
	Albania v Northern Ireland	
	Germany v Albania	
	Armenia v Ukraine	
	Portugal v Northern Ireland	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
	3	1	1	1	4	2	4
	1	1	0	0	5	1	3
	3	0	2	1	2	6	2
	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Switzerland

Fringer fights back

Arthur Rotmil on the problems facing the new Swiss coach

SWITZERLAND made the worst possible start to their World Cup qualifying campaign, beaten 1-0 by rank outsiders Azerbaijan in Baku.

The subsequent 3-2 away win over Finland only partially erased the bitter memory of that nightmare opening.

The media were quick to condemn the players as inept and described their performance as "the worst in Swiss history". The fans also derided the team, while new team manager Rolf Fringer faced a barrage of criticism.

"Our side had no heart and no fire in their bellies," was one of the kinder comments about the debacle.

Switzerland's best players, Ciriaco Sforza and forward Alain Sutter, declared they would "never play for the national team again". Then, after a talk with Fringer, both decided to carry on in national colours, Sutter with the proviso that his German club, Freiburg, must come first.

The coach stressed: "I have found that some players are not wholeheartedly loyal to the cause. We are not going to chase after those who don't want to play in the national team."

The next assignment was widely regarded as 'decisive' – an away tie against Finland in Helsinki – and omens were not good. Top strikers Kubilay Turkyilmaz and Marco Grassi were out, injured and sick respectively. Their deputies, Stephane Chapuisat and Adrian Knup, were out of form.

There was unrest within the squad, fuelled by regional rivalries and differences of opinion about the playing system.

One of the best players, Murat Yakin, who missed a penalty in Azerbaijan, explained: "We've only had four or five days with Fringer spent on preparations, and he insisted on doing everything differently to Artur Jorge. Now we are expected to play 4-4-2 and we have to get used to this system again.

"This was favoured by Roy Hodgson, but rejected by Jorge."

After the World Cup draw the Swiss were jubilant, firstly because they were

Swiss hit . . . Chapuisat strikes against Finland

in a group of five teams instead of six, secondly because Norway, Hungary, Finland and Azerbaijan are not exactly from the top drawer and thus the chances to qualify were better than even.

But the pile-up of fixtures is causing problems. In 21 weeks the home-based Swiss are expected to play 35 matches at club and international level. The fact that 12 players are with clubs abroad is at once a blessing and a curse.

Playing in some of Europe's top clubs and leagues has improved the skill of individuals. On the other hand, the multifarious systems and tactical deployments present the players with problems when they are asked to switch to those methods favoured by the national team boss.

Furthermore, the competition for places within foreign clubs is infinitely greater so that some internationals are occasionally dropped and do not get match practice.

Fringer reacted to the setback in Azerbaijan by dropping full-back Marc Hottiger and midfielder Christophe Ohrel and making six changes. Hottiger's demotion was not unexpected. Having lost his place at Newcastle, he has not been regularly chosen by Everton.

In the circumstances the win in Finland was greeted with deep relief. Fringer's bold gamble paid off remarkably and he said: "This victory gave me a great deal of satisfaction because I had to re-organise the team. There was a big risk involved in making six changes and I was rewarded for my instincts."

Fringer, a Swiss-born Austrian citizen, showed courage in leaving out experienced players and banking on youth: five men were 23 or younger. The 'baby' was 18-year-old full-back Bernt Haas from Grasshopper, who did well.

Sforza, who apologised to the squad before the match for his "resignation", was the best man on the field, and admitted: "I made a mistake by announcing that I would quit."

After the match he said modestly: "I was pleased with my performance," and he had every reason to be. He fought like a lion and covered the entire pitch.

Striker Chapuisat played one of his best internationals for ages; not one Swiss earned poor marks. Of course, one should not overrate this success against modest opposition, but Fringer and his men can look forward to the next qualifier with renewed confidence and optimism.

SWITZERLAND RESULTS SINCE USA 94

Date	Opponents	Result		Venue
6.9.94	UAE	W	1-0	Sion
12.10.94	Sweden	W	4-2	Berne
16.11.94	Iceland	W	1-0	Lausanne
14.12.94	Turkey	W	2-1	Istanbul
8.3.95	Greece	D	1-1	Athens
29.3.95	Hungary	D	2-2	Budapest
26.4.95	Turkey	L	2-1	Berne
19.6.95	Italy	L	1-0	Lausanne
23.6.95	Germany	L	2-1	Berne
16.8.95	Iceland	W	2-0	Reykjavik
6.9.95	Sweden	D	0-0	Gothenburg
11.10.95	Hungary	W	3-0	Zurich
15.11.95	England	L	2-1	London
13.3.96	Luxembourg	D	1-1	Luxembourg
27.3.96	Austria	L	1-0	Vienna
24.4.96	Wales	W	2-0	Lugano
1.6.96	Czech Rep	L	2-1	Basle
8.6.96	England	D	1-1	London
13.6.96	Holland	L	2-0	Birmingham
18.6.96	Scotland	L	1-0	Birmingham
31.8.96	Azerbaijan	L	1-0	Baku
6.10.96	Finland	W	3-2	Helsinki

- Record: Played 22, won 8, drawn 5, lost 9, goals scored 27, goals conceded 24.
- On October 12 1994, Switzerland met Sweden for the 25th time. The Swiss eventually won 4-2 having trailed 2-1.
- In Athens, Switzerland played their 550th full international since their debut in 1905.
- Even though the Swiss lost 2-1 against Germany in a three-nations tournament to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Swiss FA, Adrian Knup scored Switzerland's 800th international goal.
- The last Swiss win over Germany was in 1956, when they won 3-1 in Frankfurt. The sides have met 14 times since then, with Switzerland managing a draw once, in 1968.
- Adrian Knup, who has scored 26 goals for Switzerland, is his country's fourth leading goalscorer so far. Number one is still Xam Abegglen, who scored 32 times in the 1920s and 1930s.

PERRY MENEXIS

THE SQUAD

Name	Club	D.o.b	Caps (gls)
GOALKEEPERS			
Marco PASCOLO	Cagliari (Ita)	9.5.66	42
Pascal ZUBERBUHLER	Grasshopper	8.1.71	3
Stephan LEHMANN	Sion	15.8.63	7
DEFENDERS			
Stephane HENCHOZ	Hamburg (Ger)	7.9.74	21
Yvan QUENTIN	Sion	2.5.70	31
Ramon VEGA	Cagliari (Ita)	14.6.71	14
Raphael WICKY	Sion	16.4.77	4
Marco WALKER	1860 Munich (Ger)	2.5.70	2
Bernt HAAS	Grasshopper	8.4.78	1
Pascal THULER	Grasshopper	10.1.70	5
MIDFIELDERS			
Alexandre COMISETTI	Grasshopper	21.7.73	7
Antonio ESPOSITO	Grasshopper	13.12.72	0
Sebastien FOURNIER	VfB Stuttgart (Ger)	27.6.71	13 (1)
Patrick SYLVESTRE	Sion	1.9.68	11
Ciriaco SFORZA	Internazionale (Ita)	2.3.70	46 (7)
Murat YAKIN	Grasshopper	15.9.74	5 (1)
Johann VOGEL	Grasshopper	8.3.77	9
Massimo LOMBARDO	Grasshopper	9.1.73	1 (1)
Alain SUTTER	Freiburg (Ger)	22.1.68	62 (5)
FORWARDS			
Christophe BONVIN	Sion	14.4.65	44 (8)
Stephane CHAPUISAT	Bor. Dortmund (Ger)	28.6.69	52 (12)
Adrian KNUP	Galatasaray (Tur)	2.7.68	50 (26)
David SESA	Servette	10.7.73	2
Kubilay TURKYILMAZ	Grasshopper	4.3.67	53 (20)
Marco GRASSI	Monaco (Fra)	8.8.65	26 (4)

World Cup 98 Update

AFRICA

(5 teams qualify)

FIRST ROUND – 1ST LEG

31.05.96 Mauritania v Burkina Faso.....0-0
01.06.96 Uganda v Angola.....0-2
01.06.96 Sudan v Zambia.....2-0
01.06.96 Malawi v South Africa.....0-1
01.06.96 Guinea Bissau v Guinea.....3-2
01.06.96 Gambia v Liberia.....2-1
01.06.96 Namibia v Mozambique.....2-0
02.06.96 Swaziland v Gabon.....0-1
02.06.96 Mauritius v Zaire.....1-5
02.06.96 Madagascar v Zimbabwe.....1-2
02.06.96 Rwanda v Tunisia.....1-3
02.06.96 Congo v Ivory Coast.....2-0
02.06.96 Kenya v Algeria.....3-1
02.06.96 Burundi v Sierra Leone.....1-0
02.06.96 Togo v Senegal.....2-1
08.06.96 Tanzania v Ghana.....0-0

FIRST ROUND – 2ND LEG

14.06.96 Algeria v Kenya.....1-0
Kenya won 3-2 on agg
15.06.96 Senegal v Togo.....1-1
Togo won 3-2 on agg
15.06.96 South Africa v Malawi.....3-0
South Africa won 4-0 on agg
16.06.96 Burkina Faso v Mauritania.....2-0
Burkina Faso won 2-0 on agg
16.06.96 Angola v Uganda.....3-1
Angola won 5-1 on agg
16.06.96 Zambia v Sudan.....3-0
Zambia won 3-2 on agg
16.06.96 Guinea v Guinea Bissau.....3-1
Guinea won 5-4 on agg
16.06.96 Mozambique v Namibia.....1-1
Namibia won 3-1 on agg
16.06.96 Gabon v Swaziland.....2-0
Gabon won 3-0 on agg
16.06.96 Zaire v Mauritius.....2-0
Zaire won 7-1 on agg
16.06.96 Zimbabwe v Madagascar.....2-2
Zimbabwe won 4-3 on agg
16.06.96 Tunisia v Rwanda.....2-0
Tunisia won 5-1 on agg
16.06.96 Ivory Coast v Congo.....1-1
Congo won 3-1 on agg
16.06.96 Sierra Leone v Burundi.....0-1
Burundi won 2-0 on agg
17.06.96 Ghana v Tanzania.....2-1
Ghana won 2-1 on agg
23.06.96 Liberia v Gambia.....4-0
Liberia won 5-2 on agg

SECOND ROUND

GROUP 1
10.11.96 Guinea v Kenya
08/09/10.11.96 Nigeria v Burkina Faso
10/11/12.10.97 Burkina Faso v Guinea
10/11/12.01.97 Kenya v Nigeria
04/05/06.04.97 Kenya v Burkina Faso
04/05/06.04.97 Nigeria v Guinea
25/26/27.04.97 Burkina Faso v Nigeria
25/26/27.04.97 Kenya v Guinea
08.06.97 Guinea v Burkina Faso
06/07/08.06.97 Nigeria v Kenya
15/16/17.08.97 Burkina Faso v Kenya
17.08.97 Guinea v Nigeria

GROUP 2
08.11.96 Egypt v Namibia
08/09/10.11.96 Liberia v Tunisia
10/11/12.01.97 Namibia v Liberia
10/11/12.01.97 Tunisia v Egypt
04/05/06.04.97 Liberia v Egypt
04/05/06.04.97 Namibia v Tunisia
25/26/27.04.97 Namibia v Egypt
25/26/27.04.97 Tunisia v Liberia
06/07/08.06.97 Egypt v Tunisia
06/07/08.06.97 Liberia v Namibia
15/16/17.08.97 Egypt v Liberia
15/16/17.08.97 Tunisia v Namibia

GROUP 3
08/09/10.11.96 Congo v Zambia
09.11.96 South Africa v Zaire
10/11/12.01.97 Zaire v Congo
12.01.97 Zambia v South Africa
04/05/06.04.97 Congo v South Africa
04/05/06.04.97 Zaire v Zambia
25/26/27.04.97 Zaire v South Africa
25/26/27.04.97 Zambia v Congo
06/07/08.06.97 Congo v Zaire
06/07/08.06.97 South Africa v Zambia
15/16/17.08.97 South Africa v Congo
15/16/17.08.97 Zambia v Zaire

GROUP 4
08/09/10.11.96 Angola v Zimbabwe
10.11.96 Togo v Cameroon
10/11/12.01.97 Cameroon v Angola
12.01.97 Zimbabwe v Togo
04/05/06.04.97 Angola v Togo
04/05/06.04.97 Cameroon v Zimbabwe
25/26/27.04.97 Cameroon v Togo
27.04.97 Zimbabwe v Angola
06/07/08.06.97 Angola v Cameroon
08.06.97 Togo v Zimbabwe
17.08.97 Togo v Angola
17.08.97 Zimbabwe v Cameroon

GROUP 5
10.11.96 Gabon v Ghana
10.11.96 Morocco v Burundi
10/11/12.01.97 Burundi v Gabon
10/11/12.01.97 Ghana v Morocco
04/05/06.04.97 Burundi v Ghana
04/05/06.04.97 Gabon v Morocco
25/26/27.04.97 Burundi v Morocco
25/26/27.04.97 Ghana v Gabon
06/07/08.06.97 Gabon v Burundi
06/07/08.06.97 Morocco v Ghana
15/16/17.08.97 Ghana v Burundi
15/16/17.08.97 Morocco v Gabon

ASIA

(Three or four teams qualify)

FIRST ROUND

GROUP 1
(IN MALAYSIA)
16.03.97 Taiwan v Saudi Arabia
16.03.97 Malaysia v Bangladesh
18.03.97 Bangladesh v Taiwan
18.03.97 Malaysia v Saudi Arabia
20.03.97 Bangladesh v Saudi Arabia
20.03.97 Malaysia v Taiwan
(IN SAUDI ARABIA)
27.03.97 Taiwan v Malaysia
27.03.97 Saudi Arabia v Bangladesh
29.03.97 Taiwan v Bangladesh
29.03.97 Saudi Arabia v Malaysia
31.03.97 Bangladesh v Malaysia
31.03.97 Saudi Arabia v Tawian

GROUP 2
(IN DAMASCUS)
02.06.97 Maldives v Iran
02.06.97 Syria v Kyrgyzstan
04.06.97 Kyrgyzstan v Iran
04.06.97 Syria v Maldives
06.06.97 Kyrgyzstan v Maldives
06.06.97 Syria v Iran
(IN TEHRAN)
09.06.97 Maldives v Syria
09.06.97 Iran v Kyrgyzstan
11.06.97 Kyrgyzstan v Syria
11.06.97 Iran v Maldives
15.06.97 Maldives v Kyrgyzstan
15.06.97 Iran v Syria

GROUP 3
(IN BAHRAIN)
08.04.97 Jordan v UAE
11.04.97 Bahrain v UAE
14.04.97 Bahrain v Jordan
(IN DUBAI)
19.04.97 Jordan v Bahrain
22.04.97 UAE v Bahrain
26.04.97 UAE v Jordan

GROUP 4
(IN OMAN)
23.03.97 Nepal v Macao
23.03.97 Oman v Japan
25.03.97 Macao v Japan
25.03.97 Oman v Nepal
27.03.97 Nepal v Japan
27.03.97 Oman v Macao
(IN TOKYO)
22.06.97 Nepal v Oman
22.06.97 Japan v Macao
25.06.97 Macao v Oman
25.06.97 Japan v Nepal
28.06.97 Macao v Nepal
28.06.97 Japan v Oman

GROUP 5
(VENUES TBA)
04.06.97 Indonesia v Cambodia
13.06.97 Indonesia v Yemen
20.06.97 Cambodia v Yemen
27.06.97 Cambodia v Indonesia
09.05.96 Yemen v Uzbekistan
16.05.97 Yemen v Cambodia
25.05.97 Uzbekistan v Cambodia
01.06.97 Indonesia v Uzbekistan
13.06.97 Yemen v Indonesia
20.06.97 Uzbekistan v Indonesia
29.06.97 Cambodia v Uzbekistan
13.07.96 Uzbekistan v Yemen

GROUP 6
23.02.97 Hong Kong v South Korea
02.03.97 Thailand v South Korea
09.03.97 Thailand v Hong Kong
16.03.97 Hong Kong v Thailand
28.05.97 South Korea v Hong Kong
01.06.97 South Korea v Thailand

GROUP 7
(VENUES TBA)
13.04.97 Lebanon v Singapore
26.04.97 Singapore v Kuwait
08.05.97 Kuwait v Lebanon
24.05.97 Singapore v Lebanon
05.06.97 Kuwait v Singapore
22.06.97 Lebanon v Kuwait

GROUP 8
04.05.97 China v Turkmenistan
04.05.97 Tadjikistan v Vietnam
11.05.97 Vietnam v China
11.05.97 Turkmenistan v Tadjikistan
18.05.97 Vietnam v Turkmenistan
18.05.97 Tadjikistan v China
01.06.97 Vietnam v Tadjikistan
01.06.97 Turkmenistan v China
08.06.97 China v Vietnam
08.06.97 Tadjikstan v Turkmenistan
15.06.97 China v Tadjikstan
15.06.97 Turkmenistan v Vietnam

GROUP 9
11.05.97 Kazakhstan v Pakistan
23.05.97 Pakistan v Iraq
06.06.97 Iraq v Kazakhstan
11.06.97 Pakistan v Kazakhstan
19.06.97 Kazakhstan v Iraq
20.06.97 Iraq v Pakistan

GROUP 10
(IN DOHA, QATAR)
20.09.97 Qatar v Sri Lanka
21.09.97 India v Philippines
23.09.97 Qatar v Philippines
24.09.97 Sri Lanka v India
26.09.97 Philippines v Sri Lanka
27.09.97 Qatar v India
Group winners advance

SECOND ROUND

Two groups of 5, winners & runners-up advance

THIRD ROUND

Two-leg play-offs, winners qualify (losers enter play-off)

LOSER'S PLAY-OFF

Winners enter two-leg play-off with Oceania winners for final berth

CONCACAF

(Three Teams Qualify)

SECOND ROUND

CARIBBEAN ZONE
1ST LEG
31.03.96 Surinam v Jamaica.....0-1
04.05.96 Puerto Rico v St Vincent.....1-2
04.05.96 Dominican Rep. v Dutch Antilles....2-1
05.05.96 St Kitts & Nevis v St Lucia.....5-1
12.05.96 Haiti v Grenada.....6-1
12.05.96 Cayman Islands v Cuba.....0-1
14.05.96 Dominica v Barbados.....0-1
not played Bermuda v Trinidad & Tobago
Bermuda withdrew
2ND LEG
21.04.96 Jamaica v Surinam.....1-0
Jamaica won 2-0 on agg
11.05.96 Dutch Antilles v Dominican Rep....0-0
Dominican Rep won 2-1 on agg
12.05.96 St Vincent v Puero Rico.....7-0
St Vincent won 9-1 on agg
14.05.96 Cuba v Cayman Islands.....5-0
Cuba won 6-0 on agg
18.05.96 Grenada v Haiti.....0-1
Haiti won 7-1 on agg
19.05.96 Barbados v Dominica.....1-0
Barbados won 2-0 on agg
19.05.96 St Lucia v St Kitts & Nevis.....0-1
St Kitts & Nevis won 6-1 on agg

THIRD ROUND

CARIBBEAN ZONE
1ST LEG
10.06.96 Cuba v Haiti.....6-1
15.06.96 Dom. Rep. v Trinidad & Tobago.1-4
23.06.96 St Kitts & Nevis v St Vincent.....2-2
23.06.96 Barbados v Jamaica.....0-1
2ND LEG
23.06.96 Trinidad & Tobago v Dom. Rep..8-0
Trin & Tob won 12-1 on agg
30.06.96 Haiti v Cuba.....1-1
Cuba won 7-2 on agg
30.06.96 St Vincent v St Kitts & Nevis....0-0
Agg: 2-2, St Vincent won on away goals
30.06.96 Jamaica v Barbados.....2-0
Jamaica won 3-0 on agg

CENTRAL AMERICAN ZONE
1ST LEG
05.05.96 Nicaragua v Guatemala.....0-1
02.06.96 Belize v Panama.....1-2
2ND LEG
09.06.96 Panama v Belize.....4-1
Panama won 6-2 on agg
10.05.96 Guatemala v Nicaragua.....2-1
Guatemala won 3-1 on agg

SEMI-FINAL ROUND

GROUP 1
01.09.96 Trin. & Tobago v C. Rica.....0-1
06.10.96 Trin. & Tobago v Guatemala...1-1
16.10.96 Guatemala v Costa Rica . *postp'd*
25.10.96 Guatemala v Trin. & Tobago ..*postp'd*
03.11.96 US v Guatemala
10.11.96 US v Trinidad & Tobago
17.11.96 Costa Rica v Guatemala
24.11.96 Trinidad & Tobago v US
01.12.96 Costa Rica v US
14.12.96 US v Costa Rica
21.12.96 Guatemala v US
21.12.96 Costa Rica v Trin. & Tobago

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Costa Rica	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Guatemala	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Trin & Tob	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
United States	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

GROUP 2
30.08.96 Canada v Panama.....3-1
08.09.96 Cuba v El Salvador.....0-5
22.09.96 Cuba v Panama.....3-1
06.10.96 Panama v El Salvador.....1-1
10.10.96 Canada v Cuba.....2-0
13.10.96 Cuba v Canada.....0-2
27.10.96 Panama v Canada.....0-0
03.11.96 Canada v El Salvador
10.11.96 El Salvador v Panama
01.12.96 El Salvador v Cuba
15.12.96 El Salvador v Canada
15.12.96 Panama v Cuba

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Canada	4	3	1	0	7	1	9
El Salvador	1	1	0	0	5	0	3
Cuba	4	1	0	3	3	10	3
Panama	3	0	1	2	2	6	1

GROUP 3
15.09.96 Jamaica v Honduras.....3-0
21.09.96 St Vincent v Mexico.....0-3
22.09.96 Honduras v Mexico.....2-1
13.10.96 St Vincent v Jamaica.....1-2
16.10.96 St Vincent v Honduras.....1-4
16.10.96 Mexico v Jamaica.....2-1
27.10.96 Honduras v Jamaica.....0-0
30.10.96 Mexico v St Vincent.....5-1
06.11.96 Mexico v Honduras
10.11.96 Jamaica v St Vincent
17.11.96 Jamaica v Mexico
17.11.96 Honduras v St Vincent
Top two in each group advance

FINAL ROUND

League system, top three qualify

OCEANIA

(0 or 1 nation qualifies)

FIRST ROUND

MELANESIAN GROUP (AT LAE, PAPUA NG)
16.09.96 Papua NG v Solomon Islands....1-1
20.09.96 Solomon Islands v Vanuatu.....1-1
22.09.96 Papua NG v Vanuatu.....2-1
Single round-robin, winner advances

POLYNESIAN GROUP
Cook Islands, Tonga, Western Samoa
Winner plays Melanesian runners-up, ties to be completed by February 15, 1997

SECOND ROUND

GROUP 1
Australia, Tahiti, Polynesian/Melanesian play-off winner
GROUP 2
Fiji, New Zealand, Melanesian Group winner
Winners advance

THIRD ROUND

Two-leg play-offs, winner advances to play Asian fourth-place team

SOUTH AMERICA

(Brazil qualify as holders, top four S American teams from a nine-nation tournament also qualify)

ROUND-ROBIN

24.04.96	Argentina v Bolivia	3-1
24.04.96	Venezuela v Uruguay	0-2
24.04.96	Colombia v Paraguay	1-0
24.04.96	Ecuador v Peru	4-1
02.06.96	Ecuador v Argentina	2-0
02.06.96	Uruguay v Paraguay	0-2
02.06.96	Venezuela v Chile	1-1
02.06.96	Peru v Colombia	1-1
06.07.96	Chile v Ecuador	4-1
07.07.96	Peru v Argentina	0-0
07.07.96	Colombia v Uruguay	3-1
07.07.96	Bolivia v Venezuela	6-1
01.09.96	Argentina v Paraguay	1-1
01.09.96	Colombia v Chile	4-1
01.09.96	Ecuador v Venezuela	1-0
01.09.96	Bolivia v Peru	0-0
09.10.96	Venezuela v Argentina	2-5
09.10.96	Uruguay v Bolivia	1-0
09.10.96	Ecuador v Colombia	0-1
09.10.96	Paraguay v Chile	2-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colombia	5	4	1	0	10	3	13
Ecuador	5	3	0	2	8	6	9
Argentina	5	2	2	1	9	6	8
Paraguay	4	2	1	1	5	3	7
Uruguay	4	2	0	2	4	5	6
Bolivia	4	1	1	2	7	5	4
Chile	4	1	1	2	7	8	4
Peru	4	0	3	1	2	5	3
Venezuela	5	0	1	4	4	15	1

10.11.96	Chile v Uruguay
10.11.96	Bolivia v Colombia
10.11.96	Paraguay v Ecuador
10.11.96	Peru v Venezuela
15.12.96	Argentina v Chile
15.12.96	Uruguay v Peru
15.12.96	Venezuela v Colombia
15.12.96	Bolivia v Paraguay
12.01.97	Uruguay v Argentina
12.01.97	Peru v Chile
12.01.97	Venezuela v Paraguay
12.01.97	Bolivia v Ecuador
12.02.97	Colombia v Argentina
12.02.97	Ecuador v Uruguay
12.02.97	Paraguay v Peru
12.02.97	Bolivia v Chile
02.04.97	Bolivia v Argentina
02.04.97	Uruguay v Venezuela
02.04.97	Paraguay v Colombia
02.04.97	Peru v Ecuador
30.04.97	Argentina v Ecuador
30.04.97	Paraguay v Uruguay
30.04.97	Chile v Venezuela
30.04.97	Colombia v Peru
08.06.97	Argentina v Peru
08.06.97	Ecuador v Chile
08.06.97	Uruguay v Colombia
08.06.97	Venezuela v Bolivia
06.07.97	Paraguay v Argentina
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06.07.97	Peru v Bolivia
06.07.97	Venezuela v Ecuador
20.07.97	Argentina v Venezuela
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20.07.97	Colombia v Ecuador
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Tino-mite . . . Asprilla strikes against Ecuador

Asprilla's six-pack

Tino's goals put Colombia on course

COLOMBIA beat the altitude of Quito and home team Ecuador 1-0 with a goal by Faustino Asprilla – his sixth as leading scorer in the group – to remain in first place and unbeaten after five games in the South American World Cup qualifying contest.

The Colombians took some 20 minutes to get used to the ball moving faster at this altitude, but then their better soccer proved decisive in their deserved victory.

Ecuador, now coached by Colombian Francisco Maturana, who took his country to the last World Cup finals, remained second in the nine-team group, four points behind Colombia.

Argentina got another fright when weak Venezuela took the lead after seven minutes. Then Argentina threw away chance after chance – while Venezuela had hardly any – before a rebound bounced Ortega's way for him to run through and equalise after 35 minutes.

The remaining goals in Argentina's 5-2 victory came in the last 22 minutes, but they conceded a goalkeeper's free-kick for the second game running when Rafel Dudamel beat Olympic goalkeeper Pablo Cavalero for Venezuela's second goal three minutes from the end.

In the previous match Paraguay's Jose Luis Chilavert had beaten German Buros the same way in a 1-1 draw.

While coach Daniel Passarella had no trouble in getting the players he wanted from abroad – only four starters and one substitute this time – he had problems with Boca Juniors, who would not release defenders Caceres and Fabbri. They had a Super Cup match scheduled at almost the same time.

The result left Argentina in third place – the top four qualify for France – but only a point ahead of Paraguay, who deservedly won 2-1 at home against Chile and have a game in hand. Paraguay looked for victory from the start, while Chile were more cautious and probably would have been satisfied with a draw . . . and they scored first.

Chilavert this time had a quiet day and stayed on his line – no free-kicks, no penalties, no arguments, no gestures. Paraguay started with eight exiles and later used a ninth.

Uruguay moved into fifth place – also with a match in hand – by beating Bolivia 1-0 in Montevideo, somewhat luckily when Bolivian defender Pena put through his own goal.

Enzo Francescoli was persuaded to come out of international retirement and a full house turned up to cheer him, but the team's problems were hardly resolved. Uruguay created little danger.

ERIC WEIL

Canada first to make final stage

THE CURRENT round of CONCACAF zone qualifying (12 nations in three groups, top two qualify for the next round) produced both upsets and tragedy.

Guatemala's qualifying schedule has been put on hold after 84 fans were killed before a scheduled match against Costa Rica, as reported on page 12.

Canada are the only nation through to the CONCACAF final six, following three wins and a 0-0 draw against Panama.

On s poor pitch in Panama City, Guatemalan referee Carlos Batres made some controversial decisions, sending off Canada's Peschisolido and Forrest for unsportsmanlike conduct, and the teams traded elbows and punches throughout.

Qualifying success has propelled Canada to 56 on the FIFA world list, and fans have nicknamed Edmonton's Commonwealth Stadium 'St Paul's Cathedral' in honour of the team's star. Peschisolido's second-half goal against the Cubans, where he beat four defenders after chesting down a loose ball, still has fans buzzing.

Panama have managed only two points and have only two games remaining on the schedule. Officials sacked manager Cesar Mataruna and hired Orlando Munoz in his place.

That leaves Cuba and El Salvador battling for second place behind the Canadians. Because of the political and economic instability of the island nation, Cuba sold the rights to all home games. So, three days after losing 2-0 to Canada, the teams met again in Edmonton for Cuba's 'home' match.

The Canadians, thanks to Peschisolido and Polish-born midfielder Tomasz Radzinski (Germinal Ekeren) triumphed 2-0 the second time around.

Group 1 is at a standstill because of the Guatemalan tragedy and the US's refusal to play any qualifying games until the end of the MLS season.

In Group 3, Mexican fans are furious – and with good reason. After a 2-1 upset against the Hondurans, the Mexicans could only eke out a 2-1 decision over Jamaica at Azteca Stadium.

Mexico's troubles mean a tough fight with Jamaica and Honduras for the two available play-off spots. Even though Honduras shocked Mexico, they could not overcome Jamaica, losing 3-0 to the islanders in Kingston.

The Mexican dilemma is proof that the teams in CONCACAF are a lot closer than the world ranking list would suggest. Parity is the watch-word in North and Central America. This should become even more evident during the final round of qualifying.

"The sport has changed," said Peschisolido. "There are no great footballing nations any more. On any given day, any team can beat another."

Even so, the US, Canada and Mexico are favoured to go to France.

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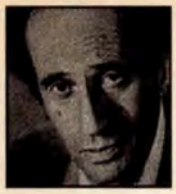

Brian Glanville's *LAST WORD*

A sign of sheer stupidity

'Moment of idiocy' . . . Bosnich's Nazi salute at White Hart Lane

"AGAINST stupidity," wrote the poet Schiller, "the gods themselves struggle in vain." A German poet, mark you, which in the present context is quite relevant. The context of Mark Bosnich's moment of idiocy – it seems, in retrospect, not much worse – at White Hart Lane.

I was there, at that utterly mediocre match. What followed Bosnich's response to the jeering, the "Klinsmann" chants, of the crowd behind his goal has had repercussions he never could have dreamed of.

All those abject, grovelling apologies have, if anything, served to make things worse, to keep the rot on the boil. Though they may have mitigated the situation in so far as they emphasise Bosnich's ingenuousness. In the first place, though one is prepared to accept that rather than live in Sydney he may have been brought up deep in the Outback with corks hanging from his hat, how could he possibly NOT know that Spurs, for reasons we shall delve into in a moment, were known as the Tottenham Yids, and that many (no, Bosnich, not by any means most) of their supporters were Jewish?

The possibility, then, that his was an anti-Semitic gesture always would be on the cards. Very well, it was a joke salute, with the left hand not the right, and his right forefinger extended beneath his nose to denote a Hitler moustache, but why make it at all? If it were a knee-jerk reaction to the mere name and nationality of Klinsmann, whom he had ploughed into at Villa Park last year, it was a very bizarre one.

'Tottenham Yids' was initially an insulting nickname applied over 30 years ago by the fans of other London clubs, because Spurs at the time had so many Jewish hangers-on around the players. Who can forget One-Armed Lew and Johnny the Stick?

Morrie Keston, of course, was in another league entirely, a solid successful businessman who would never hurt a fly. The Spurs fans, to their great credit, made a joke of the nickname, taking it on board, and even displaying Israeli flags at their games, at which you could hear a chorus of "Yiddo, yiddo!"

The irony being that though Spurs in future years had two Jewish chairmen and a Jewish manager – Irving Scholar, Alan Sugar and David Pleat – they had a thoroughly Gentile, hardly philo-Semitic, board at the time the opprobrious nickname was coined.

The more Bosnich grovelled, the more he put his foot in it. He was especially crass to remark that his own Croatian relatives had perished in the war. On which side, one might have asked?

As Richard Littlejohn promptly pointed out in his *Daily Mail* column, the Croats in the last war were allies of the Nazis. Indeed, they wiped out tens of thousands of Serbs, whose own recent genocide has been a kind of brutal reprisal, and threw Jews into concentration camps.

Those grovelling apologies have, if anything, served to make things worse, to keep the rot on the boil

During the recent Euro 96 tournament, Croatian supporters were seen to give Nazi salutes when their anthem was being played, while the President, Tudjman, has made no secret of his anti-Semitism.

I am perfectly happy to believe that Bosnich harbours no such sentiments, but this might have entered his head as well, before he burlesqued his salute.

Dancing to different tunes

TALKING of Croats, Croatia and Euro 96, how strange that there has been no apparent disciplinary sequel to the moment when Slaven Bilic, during the Croatia-Germany game in Manchester, kicked Germany's Christian Ziege, while he was lying on the ground.

I was there and, like almost everybody else in the ground save, seemingly, the inept referee, who was standing right beside it, saw what happened.

When, in Boston, at the end of the Italy v Spain 1994 World Cup match, the Italian Mauro Tassotti smashed an elbow into Luis Enrique's nose, the referee did not see it, but FIFA did, on television, and banned Tassotti for eight games.

This seemed, to some, an over-reaction, the possible consequence of the inadequate punishment of Brazil's Leonardo for viciously elbowing America's Tab Ramos in the head – a potentially lethal assault. But at least the assault was punished.

So do FIFA and UEFA dance to a different disciplinary tune? I think we should be told.

Banter at its worst

BASTA with the banter, chaps. It's getting embarrassing. The chaps being Peter Brackley, in his *Channel 4* Italian commentaries, and Alan Green, on *BBC Radio 5 Live*.

Yes, Peter, we know Ray Wilkins is bald, we know he is no longer young, and if, afterwards in the studio bar – we also know you aren't in Italy – you want to taunt him with the facts, that's between you and his tolerance. To hear that fearful joshing in the midst of commentary provokes only a mild nausea.

There's banter, too, between Mark Lawrenson and Alan Green which is no more amusing and simply gets in the way of the commentary. I forbear to repeat my strictures on *5 Live* commentaries. One day I hope they will work out their problems and do it as the French, the Italians and the Spaniards do. Multi-match.

From Istanbul, Lawrenson spoke of Fenerbahce's manager, "Lazaroni; obviously an Italian." Actually a Brazilian, manager of their 1990 World Cup team.

Three blind sheep

SOMEONE, some day should write a book with the title *The Poverty of Tacticism*. *Pace* Karl Popper. It scarcely could have been more clearly shown than by Glenn Hoddle's bemused strategies in the game England so undeservedly won against Poland.

The three-man defence was a bad joke. Poor Andy Hinchcliffe, picked because he just happened to be a left-back with a left foot, was hopelessly out of his depth.

Paul Gascoigne, after Hoddle had eulogised him before the game and suggested (Heaven help us) that he might go on for years, stuttered and struggled; though that had little to do with tactics, even if some thought Gazza was used too deep.

Gareth Southgate has become the beneficiary of the nation's sugary sentimentality for missing That Penalty, but he is emphatically not an international centre-half. Stuart Pearce is essentially a left-back, Gary Neville an attacking right-back.

Yet our clubs, like sheep, are falling over themselves to implement the three-man defence, when so few of them do it properly or effectively. Sheep they are and sheep they always have been. Just as, in the 30s, they so slavishly followed Arsenal with the Third-Back Game. Then, after the 1958 World Cup, followed the four-in-line defence pattern.

Knock, knock, it's Nowak

HOW tantalising, not least for Port Vale, to think they might have acquired Piotr Nowak three years ago!

Nowak, as that interesting profile in *WORLD SOCCER* tells us, has literally kicked about Europe for years until at 32, he established himself with that marvellous game against England at Wembley.

When he was playing for Young Boys in Switzerland he was brought over for a trial by Port Vale. It may seem the stuff of science fiction, but happen it did. The trial took place at Turf Moor under heavy rain, in a game between Vale reserves and Burnley reserves.

John Rudge, then as now the resilient and embattled Vale manager, pronounced that he did not think Piotr could cut it in England. Brian Eastick, then working for Crystal Palace, said they might have a look at him, but nothing happened.

So to Turkey and eventually to Munich 1860. Did I hear you say funny game, football?

Not so canny Kenny

IN his recent autobiography, Kenny Dalglish got Danny Blanchflower badly wrong. "I adopted Blanchflower's attitude – get your retaliation in first or, in his words, 'Equalise first,' " he wrote.

Danny Blanchflower was absolutely the last person to promote such a squalid philosophy. I remember coming back with him on the same train as the Spurs team from a match against Everton, when he was still seething at the violence of certain Everton players. Danny relied on intelligence and skill.

Dalglish, or perhaps his ghost, clearly confused what Danny said in jest before Northern Ireland set out for the finals of the World Cup in Sweden in 1958. "We've got a plan!" he said, whimsically. "We're going to equalise before the other side have scored!"

Get your retaliation in first, indeed! What a distortion.

'Distorted' opinion . . . Kenny Dalglish

A family full of pathos

JACK CHARLTON, *an Autobiography* is as combative, outspoken and emotional as you might have expected. There is also a distinct pathos.

We have known for a quarter century and more that Jack never felt there was the least comparison between himself and his younger brother Bobby, always referred to as Our Kid, as footballers. No envy there, then. But rivalry runs much deeper.

Jack makes it very clear that Bobby, two years younger, was the preferred child of their vigorously independent mother, Cissie, who was the sister of the Milburn brothers, the cousin of the illustrious Jackie, and herself a notable player in the street.

Poor Jack was even reduced to grubbing up discarded glasses, cleaning them, and presenting them to his mother.

Life being as unfair as it is, Bobby also was a much superior scholar, passing the 11-plus where Jackie failed it. The more embittering for Jack, then – who says he has no relations now with Bobby – that the preferred child should be the one to reject their mother. Who, after she had failed to find a rapport with Bobby's wife, Norma, steadily withdrew. Norma did not even go to see her in the years she was dying in a nursing home.

Jack emphasises that Norma had nothing to do with this, but one imagines this was irrelevant. A strong, even dominant, mother, and a favourite child who must ultimately make the tormenting choice between mother and wife. The story is not unfamiliar.

Jackie says that after Bobby had been traumatised by the Munich air crash in February 1958, "he stopped smiling, a trait which continues to this day." Actually, it doesn't. I remember how introverted and withdrawn poor Bobby was at the Swedish World Cup, months after the Munich crash. Meet him today, and he is a charming humorous fellow.

I hope the Charltons make it up, and soon.

Unpunished . . . Bilic's kick at Germany's Ziege

Milan

Gavin Hamilton pays his respects to Europe's finest stadium

ALFRED EDWARDS has a lot to answer for. The Englishman introduced the Milanese to football in 1899 when he founded the Milan Cricket and Football Club. He had little idea what he had started.

No other city can lay claim to the title 'Football Capital of Europe' with more justification than Milan, even if the Milanese are not entirely comfortable with the label. No other city has welcomed home more victorious teams from European finals. No other city has produced more *scudetto*-winning sides. No other city has a local derby to match that of Milan versus Inter for passion or intensity. And no other city has the Giuseppe Meazza stadium, aka San Siro.

The story of the *Rossoneri* (Milan) and the *Nerazzurri* (Inter) starts, inevitably, with an English connection. The first Milan side featured Edwards, five fellow countrymen and five uppercrust Italians, including the wealthy tyre maker Piero Pirelli. They enjoyed a great deal of early success, winning the championship in 1901 and again in 1906 and 1907, before the split which led to the formation of Inter.

On March 9, 1908, 45 dissident members of FC Milan (all references to cricket were dropped in 1904) met in the Oroglio restaurant in the city. The dissidents, mostly Italian and Swiss and including the renowned painter Muggiani, were angry at the influence being exerted by the club's (British) founding fathers. They decided to form a rival to Milan, and chose a name, Internazionale Milano, which reflected their more cosmopolitan outlook.

Both clubs endured a nomadic existence during their formative years. Milan played their first games at the Trotter, the horse-racing track, before moving on to Campo dell'Acquabella, Campo di Via Bronzetti, Campo Sportivo Milanese and Campo Milan, a one-time international venue which became a tennis club.

None of these arrangements proved satisfactory and in 1925 the club moved to a new home in San Siro on the western outskirts of Milan on a site bought by Pirelli, who by now was club president.

Inter's early games were played at Campo Ticinese in the southwest of the city, but on occasions they used the Arena, the oldest venue in the world ever to have staged first-class football. The Arena was opened by Napoleon in 1807 and had been used mainly for military parades and horse racing until, in 1910, it hosted Italy's match with France. It is still used to this day for athletics and amateur games.

Inter took up residence at the Arena in 1930. By now the club had been forced by the fascist regime to change their name to Ambrosiana-Inter and merge with another, smaller Milan club, US Milanese. Ambrosiana was the patron saint of Milan; Internazionale had too many foreign connotations for Mussolini's liking.

Milan did not escape the attention of the fascists, either, dropping the anglicised Milan in favour of Associazione Calcio Milano. They reverted to Milan after the war, but kept the AC prefix. Inter, likewise, took their former name in 1946, but found they had outgrown their former home, the Arena. They moved in with Milan at San Siro in 1947 and the two clubs embarked on what has become the most famous ground-sharing arrangement in world football.

San Siro had begun life as a traditional English-style ground with one covered main stand and three open terraces. It held 35,000 and Inter were the first visitors, for a friendly in September 1926, which they had the cheek to win 6-3.

The Milan Commune (local authority) purchased the stadium from the club in 1935 and set about increasing the capacity to 55,000 by adding terraced seating in each corner.

San Siro was by now hosting regular matches of the *Azzurri* and the success of both Milan and Inter in the early 1950s (Milan won the *scudetto* in 1951 and 1955, Inter in 1953 and 1954) meant the stadium soon needed expanding again.

The main stand roof was removed, leaving the lower tier intact, and a second tier added. Most ambitious, though, was the introduction of the now-famous layered ramps around the stadium's outer walls.

The new-look stadium (capacity: 82,000) opened on June 29, 1955, with a friendly between Milan and Hungary's Kispest-Honved.

Both Milan and Inter have experienced phenomenal success at San Siro, but the stadium has hosted just two European Cup finals, in 1965 and 1970. By the 1980s San Siro was in a poor state of repair. It needed more than a name change, although the switch to the Giuseppe Meazza Stadium in 1979, in memory of the *Azzurri* idol who played for both clubs, was welcomed by one and all.

The crunch came when Italy was awarded the 1990 World Cup. The stadium had to be all-seated, but to do so would reduce the capacity to 67,000; FIFA's minimum capacity for the opening ceremony was 80,000.

The challenge was to enlarge San Siro without destroying the stadium's trademark ramps. The plan that was drawn up – 11 cylindrical towers which allowed for a third tier and a roof to be added – was a masterstroke. The capacity was raised to 83,107 but at a cost: £50million and untold grief for the groundstaff who fight a losing battle to maintain a pitch which is denied light and rain by the high-tech roof.

Despite its problems, San Siro remains one of the great wonders of the modern footballing world. Only the newly-built Amsterdam Arena comes close to it. The real beauty of San Siro is that it has never been rebuilt, only added to and improved. With the addition of the third tier (they have never been able to develop on the side which backs on to the Trotter racing track) San Siro has maintained its sense of history and become a stadium fit for the 21st century – a marvel of modern engineering and architectural foresight.

The clubs' history and the stadium's dramatic backdrop makes the Milan-Inter derby, for many, the greatest club fixture in the world. Despite the fierce rivalry, there is little to separate the fans on geographical or social grounds and, much like in Liverpool, footballing loyalties often divide families.

Inter have won more derby encounters (45 to Milan's 36) and the *Interisti* taunt the *Milanisti* with banners at San Siro declaring: *Superiori da sempre, mai stati in B* (Always superior, we have never been in Serie B), a reference to Milan twice being relegated, once for their part in a bribery scandal.

Derby tickets can be difficult to get hold of, but for other, lesser games they are available from *Milan Point* on Largo Corsia die Servi and branches of *Cariplo* bank (Milan) and *Banco Popolare Milano* (Inter).

Take the metro to Lotto and then walk. It's a fair distance, but well worth it. Then, just when you least expect it among the tree-lined streets of western Milan, San Siro appears from nowhere, a towering spaceship of a stadium.

Lord knows what Alfred Edwards would have made of it all.

San Siro through the ages *(clockwise from top)* . . . in 1934 before its first facelift; the refit for Italia 90; revamped with ramps in 1955

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